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NOCTES

AMBROSIANÆ

BY

PROFESSOR WILSON.

47825 a

IN FOUR VOLUMES

VOL. II.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
MDCCCLV

47825

ΧΡΗ Δ'ΕΝ ΣΥΜΠΟΣΙΩ ΚΥΛΙΚΩΝ ΠΕΡΙΝΙΣΣΟΜΕΝΑΩΝ
ΗΔΕΑ ΚΩΤΙΛΛΟΝΤΑ ΚΑΘΗΜΕΝΟΝ ΟΙΝΟΠΟΤΑΖΕΙΝ.

PHOC. *ap. Ath.*

[*This is a distich by wise old Phocylides,*
An ancient who wrote crabbed Greek in no silly days;
Meaning, "'TIS RIGHT FOR GOOD WINE-BIBBING PEOPLE,
NOT TO [illegible] ROUND THE BOARD LIKE A CRIPPLE;
BUT GAILY TO CHAT [illegible] DISCUSSING THEIR TIPPLE."
An excellent rule of the hearty old cock 'tis—
And a very fit motto to put to our Noctes.]

C. N. *ap. Ambr.*

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NOCTES AMBROSIANÆ.

XV.

(JULY 1827.)

ΧΡΗ Δ'ΕΝ ΣΥΜΠΟΣΙΩ ΚΥΛΙΚΩΝ ΠΕΡΙΝΙΣΣΟΜΕΝΑΩΝ
ΗΔΕΑ ΚΩΤΙΛΛΟΝΤΑ ΚΑΘΗΜΕΝΟΝ ΟΙΝΟΠΟΤΑΖΕΙΝ.

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[*This is a distich by wise old Phocylides,*
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C. N. *ap. Ambr.*

Scene I.—Two Bathing-machines in the Sea at Portobello.[1]

SHEPHERD *and* TICKLER.

Shepherd. Halloo, Mr Tickler, are you no ready yet, man? I've been a mother-naked man, in my machine here, for mair than ten minutes. Hae your pantaloons got entangled amang your heels, or are you saying your prayers afore you plunge?

Tickler. Both. These patent long drawers, too, are a confounded nuisance—and this patent short under-shirt. There is no getting out of them, without greater agility than is generally possessed by a man at my time of life.

Shepherd. Confound a' pawtents. As for mysel I never

[1] A bathing quarter near Edinburgh.

wear drawers, but hae my breeks lined wi' flannen a' the year through; and as for thae wee short corded under-shirts that clasp you like ivy, I never hae had ane o' them on sin' last July, when I was forced to cut it aff my back and breast wi' a pair o' sheep-shears, after having tried in vain to get out o't every morning for twa months. But are ye no ready, sir? A man on the scaffold wadna be allowed sae lang time for preparation. The minister or the hangman wad be jugging[1] him to fling the hankerchief.

Tickler. Hanging, I hold, is a mere flea-bite——

Shepherd. What! tae dookin?—Here goes.

[*The* SHEPHERD *plunges into the sea.*

Tickler. What the devil has become of James? He is nowhere to be seen. That is but a gull—that only a seal—and that a mere pellock. James, James, James!

Shepherd (*emerging*). Wha's that roaring? Stop a wee till I get the saut water out o' my een, and my mouth, and my nose, and wring my hair a bit. Noo, where are you, Mr Tickler?

Tickler. I think I shall put on my clothes again, James. The air is chill; and I see from your face that the water is as cold as ice.

Shepherd. Oh, man! but you're a desperate cooart. Think shame o' yoursel, stannin naked there, at the mouth o' the machine, wi' the haill crew o' yon brig sailin up the Firth, looking at ye, ane after anither, frae cyuck to captain, through the telescope.

Tickler. James, on the sincerity of a shepherd, and the faith of a Christian, lay your hand on your heart, and tell me, was not the shock tremendous? I thought you never would have reappeared.

Shepherd. The shock was naething, nae mair than what a body feels when waukenin suddenly during a sermon, or fa'in ower a staircase in a dream.—But I'm aff to Inchkeith.

Tickler. Whizz. [*Flings a somerset into the sea.*

Shepherd. Ane—twa—three—four—five—sax—seven—aught—but there's nae need o' coontin—for nae pearl diver, in the Straits o' Madagascar or aff the coast o' Coromandel, can haud in his breath like Tickler. Weel, that's surprisin. You chaise has gane about half a mile o' gate towards Portybelly sin' he gaed fizzin outower the lugs like a verra

[1] *Jugging*—jogging.

rocket. Safe us! what's this gruppin me by the legs? A sherk—a sherk—a sherk!

Tickler (*yellowing to the surface*). Blabla—blabla—bla——

Shepherd. He's keept soomin aneath the water till he's sick; but every man for himsel, and God for us a'—I'm aff.

[SHEPHERD *stretches away to sea in the direction of Inchkeith*—TICKLER *in pursuit.*

Tickler. Every sinew, my dear James, like so much whip-cord. I swim like a salmon.

Shepherd. Oh, sir! that Lord Byron had but been alive the noo, what a sweepstakes!

Tickler. A Liverpool gentleman has undertaken, James, to swim four-and-twenty miles at a stretch. What are the odds?

Shepherd. Three to one on Saturn and Neptune. He'll get numm.

Tickler. James, I had no idea you were so rough on the back. You are a perfect otter.

Shepherd. Nae personality, Mr Tickler, out at sea. I'll compare carcasses wi' you ony day o' the year. Yet, you're a gran' soomer—out o' the water at every stroke, neck, breast, shouthers, and half-way doun the back—after the fashion o' the great American serpent. As for me, my style o' soomin's less showy—laigh and lown—less hurry, but mair speed. Come, sir, I'll dive you for a jug o' toddy.

[TICKLER *and* SHEPHERD *melt away like foam-bells in the sunshine.*

Shepherd. Mr Tickler!

Tickler. James!

Shepherd. It's a drawn bate—sae we'll baith pay.—Oh, sir! Isna Embro' a glorious city? Sae clear the air, yonner you see a man and a woman stannin on the tap o' Arthur's Seat! I had nae notion there were sae mony steeples, and spires, and columms, and pillars, and obelisks, and doms, in Embro'! And at this distance the ee canna distinguish atween them that belangs to kirks, and them that belangs to naval monuments, and them that belangs to ile-gas companies, and them that's only chimley-heids in the auld toun, and the taps o' groves, or single trees, sic as poplars; and aboon a' and ahint a', craigs and saft-broo'd hills sprinkled wi' sheep, lichts and shadows, and the blue vapoury glimmer o' a Midsummer day—het, het, het, wi' the barometer at ninety; but here, to

us twa, bob-bobbin amang the fresh, cool, murmurin, and faemy wee waves, temperate as the air within the mermaid's palace. Anither dive!

Tickler. James, here goes the Fly-Wheel.

Shepherd. That beats a'! He gangs round in the water like a jack roastin beef. I'm thinkin he canna stop himsel. Safe us! he's fun' out the perpetual motion.

Tickler. What fish, James, would you incline to be, if put into scales?

Shepherd. A dolphin—for they hae the speed o' lichtnin. They'll dart past and roun' about a ship in full sail before the wind, just as if she was at anchor. Then the dolphin is a fish o' peace — he saved the life o' a poet of auld, Arion, wi' his harp—and oh! they say the cretur's beautifu' in death—Byron, ye ken, comparin his hues to those o' the sun settin ahint the Grecian Isles. I sud like to be a dolphin.

Tickler. I should choose to sport shark for a season. In speed he is a match for the dolphin—and, then, James, think what luxury to swallow a well-fed chaplain, or a delicate midshipman, or a young negro girl occasionally——

Shepherd. And feenally to be grupped wi' a hyuck in a cocked hat and feather, at which the shark rises, as a trout does at a flee, hauled on board, and hacked to pieces wi' cutlasses and pikes by the jolly crew, or left alive on the deck, gutted as clean as a dice-box, and without an inch o' bowels.

Tickler. Men die at shore, James, of natural deaths as bad as that——

Shepherd. Let me see—I sud hae nae great objections to be a whale in the Polar Seas. Gran' fun to fling a boatfu' o' harpooners into the air—or, wi' ae thud o' your tail, to drive in the stern-posts o' a Greenlandman.

Tickler. Grander fun still, James, to feel the inextricable harpoon in your blubber, and to go snoving away beneath an ice-floe with four mile of line connecting you with your distant enemies.

Shepherd. But then whales marry but ae wife, and are passionately attached to their offspring. There, they and I are congenial speerits. Nae fish that swims enjoys so large a share of domestic happiness.

Tickler. A whale, James, is not a fish.

Shepherd. Isna he? Let him alane for that. He's ca'd a

fish in the Bible, and that's better authority than Buffon. O that I were a whale!

Tickler. What think you of a summer of the American Sea-Serpent?

Shepherd. What? To be constantly cruised upon by the haill American navy, military and mercantile! No to be able to show your back aboon water without being libelled by the Yankees in a' the newspapers, and pursued even by pleasure-parties, playin the hurdy-gurdy and smokin cigars! Besides, although I hae nae objection to a certain degree o' singularity, I sudna just like to be sae very singular as the American Sea-Serpent, who is the only ane o' his specie noo extant; and whether he dees in his bed, or is slain by Jonathan, must incur the pain and the opprobrium o' defunckin an auld bachelor. What's the matter wi' you, Mr Tickler? [*Dives.*

Tickler. The calf of my right leg is rather harder than is altogether pleasant. A pretty business if it prove the cramp; and the cramp it is, sure enough—Hallo—James—James—James — hallo — I'm seized with the cramp — James — the sinews of the calf of my right leg are gathered up into a knot about the bulk and consistency of a sledge-hammer——

Shepherd. Nae tricks upon travellers. You've nae cramp. Gin you hae, streck out your richt hind leg, like a horse geein a funk—and then ower on the back o' ye, and keep floatin for a space, and your calf 'ill be as saft's a cushion. Lord safe us! what's this? Deevil tak me if he's no droonin. Mr Tickler, are you droonin? There he's doun ance, and up again—twice, and up again;—but it's time to tak haud o' him by the hair o' the head, or he'll be doun amang the limpets! [SHEPHERD *seizes* TICKLER *by the locks.*

Tickler. Oho—oho—oho—ho—ho—ho—hra—hra—hrach—hrach.

Shepherd. What language is that? Finnish? Noo, sir, dinna rug me doun to the bottom alang wi' you in the dead-thraws.

Tickler. Heaven reward you, James—the pain is gone—but keep near me.

Shepherd. Whammle yoursel ower on your back, sir. That 'ill do. Hoo are you now, sir? Yonner's the James Watt[1]

[1] The "James Watt" plied between London and Edinburgh, under the command of Captain Bain.

steamboat, Captain Bain, within half a league. Lean on my airm, sir, till he comes alangside, and it 'ill be a real happiness to the captain to save your life. But what 'ill a' the leddies do whan they're hoistin us aboard? They maun just use their fans.

Tickler. My dear Shepherd, I am again floating like a turtle,—but keep within hail, James. Are you to windward or leeward?

Shepherd. Right astarn. Did you ever see, sir, in a' your born days, sic a sky? Ane can scarcely say he sees't, for it's maist invisible in its blue beautifu' tenuity, as the waters o' a well! It's just like the ee o' ae lassie I kent lang ago—the langer you gazed intil't, the deep, deep, deeper it grew—the cawmer and the mair cawm—composed o' a smile, as an amythist is composed o' licht—and seeming something impalpable to the touch, till you ventured, wi' fear, joy, and tremmlin to kiss it—just ae hesitatin, pantin, reverential kiss—and then to be sure your verra sowl kent it to be a bonny blue ee, covered wi' a lid o' dark fringes, and drappin aiblins a bit frichtened tear to the lip o' love.

Tickler. What is your specific gravity, James? You float like a sedge.

Shepherd. Say rather a Nautilus, or a Mew. I'm native to the yelement.

Tickler. Where learned you the natatory art, my dear Shepherd?

Shepherd. Do you mean soomin? In St Mary's Loch. For a haill simmer I kept plouterin alang the shore, and pittin ae fit to the grun', knockin the skin aff my knees, and makin nae progress, till ae day, the gravel haein been loosened by a flood, I plowpt in ower head and ears, and in my confusion, turnin my face to the wrang airt, I swom across the loch at the widest, at ae streetch, and ever after that could hae soomed ony man in the Forest for a wager, excep Mr David Ballantyne, that noo leeves ower-by yonner, near the Hermitage Castle.

Tickler. Now, James, you are, to use the language of Spenser, the Shepherd of the Sea.

Shepherd. O that I had been a sailor! To hae circumnavigated the warld! To hae pitched our tents, or built our bowers, on the shores o' bays sae glitterin wi' league-lang wreaths o' shells, that the billows blushed crimson as they

murmured! To hae seen our flags burnin meteor-like, high up amang the primæval woods, while birds bright as ony buntin sat trimmin their plummage amang the cordage, sae tame in that island where ship had haply never touched afore, nor ever might touch again, lying in a latitude by itsel, and far out o' the breath o' the tredd-winds! Or to hae landed wi' a' the crew, marines and a', excep a guard on shipboard to keep aff the crowd o' canoes, on some warlike isle, tossin wi' the plumes on chieftains' heads, and soun'-soun'-soundin wi' gongs! What's a man-o'-war's barge, Mr Tickler, beautifu' sicht though it be, to the hundred-oared canoe o' some savage Island-king! The King himsel lyin in state—no dead, but leevin, every inch o' him — on a platform — aboon a' his warriors standin wi' war-clubs, and stane-hatchets, and fish-bane spears, and twisted mats, and tattooed faces, and ornaments in their noses, and painted een, and feathers on their heads a yard heigh, a' silent, or burstin out o' a sudden intil shootin sangs o' welcome or defiance, in a language made up o' a few lang strang words—maistly gutturals—and gran' for the naked priests to yell intil the ears o' their victims, when about to cut their throats on the altar-stane that Idolatry had incrusted with blood, shed by stormy moonlicht to glut the maw of their sanguinary God. Or say rather—oh, rather say, that the white-winged Wonder that has brought the strangers frae afar, frae lands beyond the setting sun, has been hailed with hymns and dances o' peace—and that a' the daughters of the Isle, wi' the daughter o' the King at their head, come a' gracefully windin alang in a figur, that, wi' a thousan' changes, is aye but ae single dance, wi' unsandalled feet true to their ain wild singin, wi' wings fancifully fastened to their shouthers, and, beautifu' creturs! a' naked to the waist—But whare the deevil's Mr Tickler? Has he sunk during my soliloquy? or swum to shore? Mr Tickler—Mr Tickler—I wush I had a pistol to fire into the air, that he might be brought to. Yonner he is, playin at porpuss. Let me try if I can reach him in twenty strokes—it's no aboon a hunder yards. Five yards a stroke—no bad soomin in dead water. ——There, I've done it in nineteen. Let me on my back for a rest.

Tickler. I am not sure that this confounded cramp——

Shepherd. The cramp's just like the hiccup, sir—never think o't, and it's gane. I've seen a white lace veil, sic as

Queen Mary 's drawn in, lyin afloat, without stirrin aboon her snawy broo, saftenin the ee-licht—and it's yon braided clouds that remind me o't, motionless, as if they had lain there a' their lives; yet, wae's me! perhaps in ae single hour to melt away for ever!

Tickler. James, were a Mermaid to see and hear you moralising so, afloat on your back, her heart were lost.

Shepherd. I'm nae favourite noo, I suspeck, amang the Mermaids.

Tickler. Why not, James? You look more irresistible than you imagine. Never saw I your face and figure to more advantage—when lying on the braes o' Yarrow, with your eyes closed in the sunshine, and the shadows of poetical dreams chasing each other along cheek and brow. You would make a beautiful corpse, James.

Shepherd. Think shame o' yoursel, Mr Tickler, for daurin to use that word, and the sinnies o' the cauf o' your richt leg yet knotted wi' the cramp. Think shame o' yoursel! That word's no canny.

Tickler. But what ail the Mermaids with the Shepherd?

Shepherd. I was ance lyin half asleep in a sea-shore cave o' the Isle o' Sky, wearied out by the verra beauty o' the moonlicht that had keepit lyin for hours in ae lang line o' harmless fire, stretchin leagues and leagues to the rim o' the ocean. Nae sound, but a bit faint, dim plash—plash—plash o' the tide — whether ebbin or flawin I ken not — no against, but upon the weedy sides o' the cave——

Tickler.—

> " As when some shepherd of the Hebride Isles,
> Placed far amid the melancholy main!"

Shepherd. That soun's like Thamson—in his "Castle o' Indolence." A' the haill warld was forgotten—and my ain name—and what I was—and where I had come frae—and why I was lyin there,—nor was I onything but a Leevin Dream.

Tickler. Are you to windward or leeward, James?

Shepherd. Something—like a cauldor breath o' moonlicht—fell on my face and breast, and seemed to touch all my body and my limbs. But it canna be mere moonlicht, thocht I, for, at the same time, there was the whisperin—or say rather, the

wavering o' the voice—no alang the green cave wa's, but close intil my ear, and then within my verra breast, — sae, at first, for the soun' was saft and sweet, and wi' a touch o' plaintive wildness in't no unlike the strain o' an Eolian harp, I was rather surprised than feared, and maist thocht that it was but the wark o' my ain fancy, afore she yielded to the dwawm o' that solitary sleep.

Tickler. James, I hear the Steamer.

Shepherd. I opened my een, that had only been half steekit —and may we never reach the shore again, if there was not I, sir, in the embrace o' a Mermaid!

Tickler. James — remember we are well out to Inchkeith. If you please, no——

Shepherd. I would scorn to be drooned with a lee in my mouth, sir. It is quite true that the hair o' the cretur is green—and it's as slimy as it's green—slimy and sliddery as the sea-weed that cheats your unsteady footing on the rocks. Then, what een! — oh, what een! — Like the boiled een o' a cod's head and sheuthers!—and yet expression in them—an expression o' love and fondness, that would hae garred an Eskimaw scunner.

Tickler. James, you are surely romancing.

Shepherd. Oh, dear, dear me!—hech, sirs! hech, sirs!—the fishiness o' that kiss! — I had hung up my claes to dry on a peak o' the cliff—for it was ane o' thae lang midsummer nichts, when the sea-air itself fans ye wi' as warm a sugh as that frae a leddy's fan, when you're sittin side by side wi' her in an arbour——

Tickler. Oh, James—you fox——

Shepherd. Sae that I was as naked as either you or me, Mr Tickler, at this blessed moment — and whan I felt mysel enveloped in the hauns, paws, fins, scales, tail, and maw o' the Mermaid o' a monster, I grued till the verra roof o' the cave let doun drap, drap, drap upon us—me and the Mermaid —and I gied mysel up for lost.

Tickler. Worse than Venus and Adonis, my dear Shepherd.

Shepherd. I began mutterin the Lord's Prayer, and the Creed, and the hundred and nineteenth Psalm—but a' wudna do. The Mermaid held the grup—and while I was splutterin out her kisses, and convulsed waur than I ever was under the warst nichtmare that ever sat on my stamach, wi' ae despe-

rate wallop we baith gaed tapsalteerie—frae ae sliddery ledge to anither — till, wi' accelerated velocity, like twa stanes, increasin accordin to the squares o' the distances, we played plunge like porpusses into the sea, a thousan' fadom deep—and hoo I gat rid o' the briny Beastliness nae man kens till this day; for there was I sittin in the cave, chitterin like a drookit cock, and nae Mermaid to be seen or heard; although, wad ye believe me, the cave had the smell o' crabs, and labsters, and oysters, and skate, and fish in general, aneuch to turn the stamach o' a whale or a sea-lion.

Tickler. Ship ahoy! — Let us change our position, James. Shall we board the Steamer?

Shepherd. Only look at the waves, hoo they gang weltering frae her prow and sides, and widen in her wake for miles aff! Gin we venture ony nearer, we'll never wear breeks mair. Mercy on us! she's bearin doun upon us. Let us soom fast, and passing across her bows, we shall bear up to windward out o' a' the commotion.—Captain Bain! Captain Bain! it's me and Mr Tickler, takin a soom for an appeteet—stop the ingine till we get past the bowsprit.

Tickler. Heavens! James, what a bevy of ladies on deck. Let us dive.

Shepherd. You may dive—for you swim improperly high; but as for me, I seem in the water to be a mere Head, like a cherub on a church. A boat, captain—a boat!

Tickler. James, you aren't mad, sure? Who ever boarded a steamer in our plight? There will be fainting from stem to stern, in cabin and steerage.

Shepherd. I ken that leddy in the straw-bannet and green veil, and ruby sarsnet, wi' the glass at her ee. Ye ho—Miss——

Tickler. James—remember how exceedingly delicate a thing is a young lady's reputation. See, she turns away in confusion.

Shepherd. Captain, I say, what news frae London?

Captain Bain (*through a speaking-trumpet*). Lord Wellington's amendment on the bonding clause in the corn bill again carried against Ministers by 133 to 122.[1] Sixty-six shillings!

[1] The Duke of Wellington's amendment on the Ministerial measure was, that "no foreign grain in bond shall be taken out of bond until the average price of corn shall have reached 66s."—See Alison's *History of Europe from* 1815 *to* 1852, vol. iv. p. 110; also *Annual Register*, 1827, p. 147.

Tickler. What says your friend M'Culloch to that, Captain?

Shepherd. Wha cares a bodle about corn bills in our situation? What's the Captain routin about noo, out o' his speakin-trumpet? But he may just as weel haud his tongue, for I never understand ae word out o' the mouth o' a trumpet.

Tickler. He says, the general opinion in London is, that the Administration will stand—that Canning and Brougham——

Shepherd. Canning and Brougham, indeed! Do you think, sir, if Canning and Brougham had been soomin in the sea, and that Canning had taen the cramp in the cauf o' his richt leg, as you either did, or said you did, a short while sin' syne, that Brougham wad hae safed him as I safed you? Faith, no he indeed! Hairy wad hae thocht naething o' watchin till George showed the croon o' his head aboon water, and then hittin him on the temples.

Tickler. No, no, James. They would mutually risk lives for each other's sake. But no politics at present, we're getting into the swell, and will have our work to do to beat back into smooth water. James, that was a facer.

Shepherd. Dog on it, ane wad need to be a sea-maw, or kitty-wake, or stormy petrel, or some ither ane o' Bewick's birds——

Tickler. Keep your mouth shut, James, till we're out of the swell.

Shepherd. Em — hem — umph — humph — whoo — whoo — whurr—whurr—herrachvacherach.

Tickler. Whsy—whsy—whsy—whugh—whugh—shugh—shugh—prugh—ptsugh—prgugh.

Shepherd. It's lang sin' I've drank sae muckle saut water at ae sittin—at ae soomin, I mean—as I hae dune, sir, sin' that Steamboat gaed by. She does indeed kick up a deevil o' a rumpus.

Tickler. Whoo—whoo—whoof—whroo—whroo—whroof—proof—ptroof—sprtf!

Shepherd. Ae thing I maun tell you, sir, and that's, gin you tak the cramp the noo, you maunna expeck ony assistance frae me—no, gin you were my ain faither. This bates a' the swalls! Confoun' the James Watt, quoth I.

Tickler. Nay, nay, James. She is worthy of her name—and a better seaman than Captain Bain never boxed the compass. He never comes below, except at meal-times, and a pleasanter person cannot be at the foot of the table. All night long he is on deck, looking out for squalls.

Shepherd. I declare to you, sir, that just noo, in the trough o' the sea, I didna see the top o' the Steamer's chimley. See, Mr Tickler—see, Mr Tickler—only look here—only look here—HERE'S BRONTE! MR NORTH'S GREAT NEWFUNLAN' BRONTE!

Tickler. Capital—capital. He has been paying his father a visit at the gallant Admiral's,[1] and come across our steps on the sands.

Shepherd. Puir fallow—gran' fallow—did ye think we was droonin?

Bronte. Bow—bow—bow—bow, wow, wow—bow, wow, wow.

Tickler. His oratory is like that of Bristol Hunt *versus* Sir Thomas Lethbridge.[2]

Shepherd. Sir, you're tired, sir. You had better tak haud o' his tail.

Tickler. No bad idea, James. But let me just put one arm round his neck. There we go. Bronte, my boy, you swim strong as a rhinoceros!

Bronte. Bow, wow, wow—bow, wow, wow.

Shepherd. He can do onything but speak.

Tickler. Why, I think, James, he speaks uncommonly well. Few of our Scotch members speak better. He might lead the Opposition.

Shepherd. What for will ye aye be introducin politics, sir? But, really, I hae fund his tail very useful in that swall; and let's leave him to himsel noo, for twa men on ae dowg's a sair doundraucht.[3]

Tickler. With what a bold kind eye the noble animal keeps swimming between us, like a Christian!

Shepherd. I hae never been able to perswade my heart and my understandin that dowgs haena immortal sowls. See how he steers himsel, first a wee towarts me, and then a wee towarts you, wi' his tail like a rudder. His sowl *maun* be immortal.

Tickler. I am sure, James, that if it be, I shall be extremely happy to meet Bronte in any future society.

Shepherd. The minister wad ca' that no orthodox. But the

[1] Admiral Otway. See *ante*, vol. i. p. 378.

[2] Henry Hunt, a mob orator and Radical reformer, M.P. for Preston, 1830-31; died in 1835. Sir T. Lethbridge, a Tory M.P., and large landed proprietor.

[3] *Doundraucht*—down-drag.

mystery o' life canna gang out like the pluff o' a cawnle. Perhaps the verra bit bonny glitterin insecks that we ca' ephemeral, because they dance out but ae single day, never dee, but keep for ever and aye openin and shuttin their wings in mony million atmospheres, and may do sae through a' eternity. The universe is aiblins wide aneuch.

Tickler. Eyes right! James, a boatful of ladies — with umbrellas and parasols extended to catch the breeze. Let us lie on our oars, and they will never observe us.

Bronte. Bow, wow, wow,—bow, wow, wow.

[*Female alarms heard from the pleasure-boat. A gentleman in the stern rises with an oar, and stands in a threatening attitude.*

Tickler. Ease off to the east, James—Bronte, hush!

Shepherd. I howp they've nae fooling-pieces—for they may tak us for gulls, and pepper us wi' swan-shot or slugs. I'll dive at the flash. Yon's no a gun that chiel has in his haun?

Tickler. He lets fall his oar into the water, and the "boatie rows—the boatie rows"—Hark, a song!

[*Song from the retiring boat.*

Shepherd. A very gude sang, and very well sung—jolly companions every one.

Tickler. The fair authors of the *Odd Volume!*[1]

Shepherd. What's their names?

Tickler. They choose to be anonymous, James; and that being the case, no gentleman is entitled to withdraw the veil.

Shepherd. They're sweet singers, howsomever, and the words o' their sang are capital. Baith Odd Volumes are maist ingenious, well written, and amusing.

Tickler. The public thinks so—and they sell like wildfire.

Shepherd. I'm beginning to get maist desperat thrusty, and hungry baith. What a denner wull we make! How mony miles do you think we hae swom?

Tickler. Three—in or over. Let me sound.—Why, James, my toe scrapes the sand. "By the Nail six!"

Shepherd. I'm glad o't. It 'ill be a bonny bizziness, gif ony neerdoweels hae ran aff wi' our claes out o' the machines. But gif they hae, Bronte 'ill sune grup them—Wunna ye, Bronte?

Bronte. Bow, wow, wow—bow, wow, wow.

[1] The Misses Corbett. See *ante*, vol. i. p. 252.

Shepherd. Now, Tickler, that our feet touch the grun', I'll rin you a race to the machines for anither jug.

Tickler. Done—But let us have a fair start.—Once, twice, thrice!

[TICKLER *and the* SHEPHERD *start, with* BRONTE *in the van, amid loud acclamations from the shore.—Scene closes.*

Scene II.—Inside of Portobello Fly.

MRS GENTLE, MISS GENTLE.[1]

Mrs Gentle. I suspect, Mary, that we are to have the whole coach to ourselves. It has struck four.

Miss Gentle. Mr Forsyth's coach seldom starts, I think, till about seven minutes after the hour, and I hope we may have company. It is always pleasant to me to see a new face, and hear a new voice, if it should be but for a passing half-hour of cheerfulness and good-will among strangers.

Mrs Gentle. There is an advantage, child—I had almost called it a blessing,-in being not too genteel. People who at all times keep fastidiously aloof from all society but that in which it is their fortune to move, unconsciously.come to regard a large portion of their fellow-creatures with a kind of pride not unallied to contempt, and their sympathies are confined within too narrow a range.

Miss Gentle. Yes, mamma, I often observe that those persons who, by the kindness of Providence, are enabled to lead a life of luxury—innocent and blameless in itself, fear even such an accidental and transient association with their inferiors in rank or wealth, as may befall them in such a vehicle as this, as if the contact were contamination. Why, too, should shame ever be felt but for meanness or evil-doing?

Mrs Gentle. Why, my dear Mary, we are both beginning absolutely to sermonise on other people's little weaknesses or failings. Who knows, if we had a carriage of our own to loll in, many servants, and troops of splendid friends, that we might not be among the vainest of the vain, the proudest of the proud?

Miss Gentle. You never could, mamma, for you have been tried; as for myself, I verily believe that my hauteur would

[1] It should be mentioned that the widow and her daughter who occasionally take part in these dialogues are entirely fabulous characters.

have been excessive. This is a very hot afternoon, and I do trust that fat dusty woman, with a cage and a bandbox, is not——

Mrs Gentle. Fat dusty woman, Mary! Why, may not——

Miss Gentle. My dear mother! I declare there come Mr Tickler and Mr Hogg! Do let me kiss my hand to them—perhaps they may——

Tickler. Ha! ladies—I am delighted to find we shall have your company to Edinburgh.—Hogg, ascend.

Shepherd. Hoo are ye the day, Mrs Gentle?—and hoo are you, Miss Mary. God bless your bonny gentle een. Come in, Mr Tickler—come in.—Coachman, pit up the steps. But gif you've ony parshels to get out o' the office, or ony honest outside passengers to tak up, you had better wait a wee while on them, and, as it's unco het, and a' up-hill, and your beasts wearied, tak your time, my man, and hurry nae man's cattle. Miss Mary, you'll hae been doun to the dookin?

Miss Gentle. No, Mr Hogg; I very seldom bathe in the sea. Bathing is apt to give me a headache, and to induce sleepiness.

Shepherd. That's a sign the dookin disna agree wi' your constitution. Yet though you have that kind o' complexion, my dear Mem, that the poet was dreaming o' when he said, "O call it fair, not pale," I howp devoutly that your health's gude.—I howp, Mrs Gentle, your dochter's no what's ca'd delicate.

Mrs Gentle. Mary enjoys excellent health, Mr Hogg, and is much in the open air, which, after all, is the best of baths.

Shepherd. Ye say richt—ye say richt, Mem. There's nae need o' watering a flower that opens its bosom to the dews o' heaven. Now, leddies, there's no a man in a' this warld that's less inquisitive than mysel about ither folk's concerns; yet whenever I forgather unexpectedly wi' freens I love, my heart aye asks itsel silently, on what errand o' courtesy or kindness hae they been engaged? I think, Miss Mary, I could maist guess.

Miss Gentle. No, Mr Hogg.

Shepherd. There's nae smile on your face—at least, but sic a faint smile as generally—unless I'm sair mistaen in your character—dwalls there,—sae, my dear Miss Gentle, I ken that though your visit to this place has no been an unhappy, it may hae been something o' a sad ane; and therefore, God bless you, I'll change the subject, and try and be agreeable.

Mrs Gentle. Even so, sir. We have been visiting a friend —I may almost say a sister of Mary's, who, a few weeks ago, there was but too much reason to fear, was sinking into a consumption.

Shepherd. Dinna mind, my dearest Miss Gentle, though the tears do come to your een. Friendship is never sae pure, sae unselfish, sae affeckin, in this warld, as when it breathes frae bosom to bosom o' twa young innocent maidens, wha, ha'in nae sisters o' their ain, come to love ane anither even mair dearly than if their hearts beat with the same blood. Dinna fear but she'll get better. If she seemed sinkin into a consumption weeks sin' syne, and instead o' being waur is noo better, it's a proof that God intends not yet takin her to himself in heaven.

Miss Gentle. I am truly happy, sir, to meet with you again so soon after that charming evening at Buchanan Lodge. I hope you are all well at Mount Benger?

Shepherd. Better than well; and next moon the mistress expects to see your mother and you alang wi' Mr North, according to your promise. You're no gaun to break it? What for are you lookin sae grave, baith o' you? I dinna understan' this—I am verra near about gaun to grow a wee angry.

Miss Gentle. When my dear sister shall have recovered sufficient strength for a little tour in the country, her physician has recommended—

Shepherd. No anither word. She sall come out wi' you to Yarrow. I've seen near a dizzen o' us in Mr North's coach afore noo, and no that crooded neither. You fower 'ill ilka ane hae your corner—and you, Mem, Mrs Gentle, and Mr North, 'ill be taken for the mother and the father—and Miss Mary and Miss Ellenor for your twa dochters; the ane like Bessy Bell, and the ither like Mary Gray.

Miss Gentle. Most extraordinary, Mr Hogg—why, my dear friend's name absolutely is Ellinor!

Shepherd. The moment I either see a young leddy, or lassie indeed o' ony sort, or even hear them spoken o' by ane that lo'es them, that moment I ken their Christian name. What process my mind gangs through I canna tell, except that it's intuitive like, and instantawneous. The soun' o' the unpronounced name, or raither the shadow o' the soun', comes

across my mind, and I'm never wrang ony mair than if I had heard the wean baptised in the kirk.

Miss Gentle. What fine apprehensions are given to the poet's gifted soul and senses!

Shepherd. A July at Mount Benger will add twenty years to Miss Ellenor's life. She sall hae asses' milk—and a stool to sit on in the byre every nicht when the "kye come hame" to be milked—for there's naethin better for that complaint than the balmy breath o' kine.

Miss Gentle. God bless you, sir, you are so considerate!

Shepherd. And we'll tak care no to let her walk on the gerse when the dews are on,—and no to stay out ower late in the gloamin; and in case o' a chance shower—for there's nae countin on them—she sall hae my plaid—and bonny she'll look in't, gif she be onything like her freen Miss Mary Gentle—and we'll row in a boatie on St Mary's Loch in the sunshine—and her bed sall be made cozy every nicht wi' our new brass warmin-pan, though there's no as much damp about a' the house as to dim a lookin-glass—and her food sall be Yarrow truits, and Eltrive chickens, and licht barley-scones, wi' a glass o' the mistress's currant-wine—and the banished roses sall return frae exile to her cheek, and the lilies to her breast—and her voice sall no trummle in the chorus o' a sang—and you and her may gladden our een by dancin a waltz to my fiddle—for the waltz is a bonny dance for twa maiden sisters dressed in white, wi' roses on their hair, and pink sashes roun' their waists, and silk stockins sae smooth and white, ye micht maist think they werena stockins ava, but just the pure gleam o' the natural ankle glidin alang the floor.

Miss Gentle. You draw such a picture of our Arcadia! I feel assured that we shall visit the Forest.

Shepherd. I'm sure, Miss Mary, that you believe in the doctrine o' impulses?

Miss Gentle. I wish to believe in everything beautiful—ay, even in Kilmeny's sojourn in the land of Faery, and her return, when years had flown, late late in the gloamin, to her father's ingle.

Shepherd. Mony impulses, Mem, Mrs Gentle, have come to me, between the age o' saxteen and my present time o' life—what that is, I leave you baith to guess, but no to utter—for the maist part in the silence and darkness o' nicht—but no

always sae,—sometimes in the brichtness o' sunshine, at morn or meridian—but never but when alane—a' ithers bein' either far away, or buried in sleep.

Miss Gentle. Will you have the kindness, my dear Mr Hogg, to explain yourself—for——

Shepherd. A' at ance my soul kens that it must obey the Impulse—nor ever seeks to refuse. Aftenest it is towards something sad—but although sad, seldom miserable—a journey ower the hills to see some freen, whom I hae nae reason to fear is otherwise than well and happy—but on reaching his house, I see grieffu' faces, and perhaps hear the voice o' prayer by the bedside o' ane whom the bystanders fear is about to die. Ance the Impulse led me to go by a ford, instead o' the brig, although the ford was fardest, and the river red; and I was just in time to save a puir travellin mither, wi' twa wee weans on her breast: awa she went wi' a blessing on my head, and I never saw her mair. Anither time, the Impulse sent me to a lanesome spat amang the hills, as I thought, only because the starnies were mair than usual beautifully bricht, and that I might aiblins mak a bit poem or sang in the solitude, and I found my ain brither's wee dochter, o' twelve years auld, lyin delirious o' a sudden brain fever, and sae weak that I had to carry her hame in my plaid like a bit lamb.[1] But I'm gettin wearisome, Mems—and, gude safe us! there's Bronte fechtin wi' a carter's mastiff. We're a mile frae Portybelly, and I never was sensible o' the Fly ha'in steered frae the cotch-offish. Driver—driver, stop, or thae twa dowgs 'ill devoor ane anither. There's nae occasion—Bronte has garred him flee, and that carter 'ill be wise to hand his haun; for faith, gif he strikes Bronte wi' his whup, he'll be on the braid o' his back in a jiffy, wi' a haill set o' teeth in his wizand, as lang's my fingers, and as white as yours, Miss Mary;—but wull ye let me look at that ring, for I'm unco curious in precious stanes.

[SHEPHERD *takes* MISS GENTLE'S *hand into his.*

Miss Gentle. It has been in our family, sir, for several centuries, and I wear it for my grandmother's sake, who took it off her finger and put it on mine, a few days before she died.

Shepherd. Mrs Gentle, I see your dochter's haun's just like

[1] Hogg's "Impulse" may claim kindred with the *Demon* of Socrates; differing, however, from it in this respect, that the office of the latter was never to impel, but only to restrain.

your ain—the back narrowish, but rather a wee plumpy—fingers sma' and taper, without being lang—and the beautifu' wee member, pawm an' a', as saft and warm as velvet, that has been no verra far aff the fire. Happy he whom heaven ordains, on some nae distant day, to put the thin, unadorned, unrubied ring on this finger—my dear Mary—this ane, the neist to the wee finger o' the left haun—and gin you'll ask me to the wedding, you shall get, my bonny doo, warm frae this heart o' mine, a faither's blessing.

Mrs Gentle. Let me promise for Mary, Mr Hogg; and on that day, you, Mr North, and Mr Tickler, will dine with me at Trinity Cottage.

Shepherd. I'll answer for Mr Tickler. But hoosh—speak lown, or we'll wauken him. I'm never sae happy in his company, as when he's sleepin—for his animal spirits, at times, is maist outrawgeous—his wut incessant—and the verra een o' him gleg as wummles, mair than I can thole, for hours thegither fixed on mine, as gin he wushed to bore a hole through a body's head, frae *oss frontis* to *cerebellum*. Leddies dear, you're no Phrenologists?

Mrs Gentle. We are not—from no contempt of what we do not understand—but merely because Mary's education is still in many things incomplete—and——

Shepherd. Incomplete! I dinna believe its incomplete in onything. Dinna they tell me that she can play the piawno, and the herp, and the guitawr, each sae weel, that it seems at the time to be her only instrument? Mr North, they say, 'ill sit for hours without ony cawnle in the room, only the moon lookin and listenin in at the window, while she keeps singin to the auld man tunes that somehow mak him greet—and greetin's no a mood he's in general gien to—And, then, dinna ye think Mr North has shown me some o' her verses, ay, as true poetry, Miss Mary, as Mrs Hemans's hersel?—and what for wull ye no alloo him to prent some o' them in the Magazine?

Mrs Gentle. Mary's attempts, Mr Hogg, are all unworthy that honour—and I assure you her modesty is so unaffected, that it would give her pain to see any of her trifles in print. She rarely can be brought even to sing them to Mr North, when we are alone.

Shepherd. I canna ca't a fause modesty—for there's nae-thing fause about her—indeed I love, admire, and respeck

her for't—although, God forbid I sud think that the female poetesses i' this and ither kintras sudna hae sang before a' the people,—but oh, Mem, there's a charm divine in the bits o' sangs that's owned by their writers—young, innocent, and fair—maist as if in confession o' ha'in dune something wrang—and extorted frae them, when nane but dearest freens are by, in some auld plaintive air that never seemed sae sweet before,—the singer a' the while hangin doun her head, till her hair seems in the twilight hangin like a veil ower her countenance, and you can just see the moving o' her breast, half in sadness, and half in a timid fear, yet the haill feelin a feelin o' happiness that she wad be sorry to exchange for mirth.

Mrs Gentle. I sometimes think, sir, that the education of females in this country is too much according to rule—too formal—too——

Shepherd. Far ower muckle sae. There's ower little left to theirsels, Mem. The truth is, that the creturs hae nae time to think or feel about onything but what they're taucht—every hour in the day bein' taken up wi' its ain separate task—sae that their acquirements, or accomplishments, as they ca' them, are ower mechanical, and dinna melt into, and set aff ane anither like the colours o' a rainbow, Mem, as they do in the case o' your dochter there,—and a year after leavin school, or being married, where's a' their fine gran' accomplishments then? They canna then pent a bit flower wi' distinctive petals frae natur; and as for ony new tunes, they never attempt them, and jingle ower them learnt at school unco wearisomely—for the spinnet, poorly played, is a meeserable instrument, like music dazed and daunderin in an asthmatic consumption.

Mrs Gentle. Perhaps, Mr Hogg, you may allow that such accomplishments are chiefly graceful in youth, and that they may rust out of use, without much regret, when the wife and the mother——

Shepherd. Just sae—just sae, Mem—only they sudna be gien up just a'thegither, and only by slow degrees. Though I confess I hae nae pleasure in seein mother and dochter sittin playin a duet at the same spinnet.

Miss Gentle. Phrenology is quite epidemic, Mr Hogg, among our sex in Edinburgh.

Shepherd. Haena ye observed that a' leddies that are

Phrenologists are very impident, upsettin, bauld amang men, loud talkers, and lang as weel's loud—tak desperate strides when they walk—write a strang haun o' write—grow red in the face gin you happen to contradick them—dinna behave ower reverently to their pawrents, nor yet to their husbands, gin they hae the gude luck to hae gotten wed—hae nae slicht o' haun in curlin their hair toshly, and are naewise kenspeckle for white teeth—to say naething about the girth o' their ankles—nor——

Miss Gentle. I know only one female Phrenologist, Mr Hogg —and I assure you she is a very sweet, simple, pretty girl.

Shepherd. And does she let lecturers hawnle her head?

Miss Gentle. Pardon me for again interrupting you; but Lucy Callander——

Shepherd. Is nae Phrenologist. A sweet, simple, pretty girl, wi' sic an agreeable name as Lucy Callander, canna be a Phrenologist. She'll hae a sweetheart that pretends to be ane, that he may tak impertinent opportunities to weave her fair tresses roun' his fingers, and mak "the Sceeance," as the fules ca't, subservient to a little innocent flirtation, Mem. That's no uncommon, Mem. There's nae scarcity o' siccan disciples.

Mrs Gentle. Surely, sir, no gentleman would so far forget his natural respect for the delicacy and dignity of the sex as under any circumstances to act so insultingly, so vulgarly, and so coarsely——

Shepherd. Ony member o' the Phrenological Society, Mem, would do sae, without meaning ony insult, but just frae the obtuse insolence characteristic o' the seck. In matters o' sceeance, a' the ordinary decencies, and delicacies, and proprieties o' life maun be laid aside; and sic an angelic head as the ane I see before me, glitterin wi' sunbeams, and wi' the breathin incense o' morn, submitted to be pawed upon (the beasts ca't manipulated) by fingers fetidly familiar wi' plaster-o'-Paris casts o' the skulls o' murderous Jezebels, like Mrs Mackinnon,[1] or aiblins wi' the verra skull itsel, and a comparison instituted, possibly to the advantage o' her that has been hanged and disseckit, and made an atomy[2] o', between

[1] Mary Mackinnon or M'Innes, executed 16th April 1823, for the murder, on the 8th February preceding, of William Howat, in her own house on the South Bridge, Edinburgh.

[2] *Atomy*—a skeleton.

the character o' that dochter o' sin and perdition, and this your ain child o' innocence and bliss.

Mrs Gentle. Aren't you pressing the point against the Phrenologists too far, Mr Hogg?

Shepherd. No half far aneuch. They said that she-devil wha had brought sae mony a puir young lassie to destruction, and broken so mony a parental heart, had a great organ o' veneration; and how think ye they proved the correspondence o' her character wi' what they ca' her development? Why, that she ance drapped on her knees on the Calton Hill and imprecated furious curses on the vessel that was carrying off an offisher, or some other profligate, with whom she had lived in sin and shame! I could show you the words.

Mrs Gentle. Mr North, sir, I can assure you, regards Phrenology much more favourably than you seem——

Shepherd. What care I for Mr North, Mem, or indeed ony ither Man, in a maitter, no sae muckle o' pure philosophy, as common sense? Besides, Mr North only seems to humour sic folly, to see hoo far it 'ill gang—and it's gran' sport to hear him acquiescin wi' a Phrenologist, the silly cretur considerin him a convert, till, in the pride o' his heart, the ass brays sae loud and lang, that the haill company is startled, and Lang-Lugs himsel perceeves that he has been trottin for their amusement, and had his nose a' the while tickled by Mr North, wi' the *nemo-me-impune-lacæsset* thistle that grows on the back o' *Blackwood's Magazine.*

Miss Gentle. Have any of the gentlemen you allude to, sir, written any works of merit—in prose or verse?—for I confess that, if they have, I should feel the more disposed to believe that their philosophy was true.

Shepherd. I never heard tell o' ony. Let a Phrenologist write ae beautifu' sang o' four stanzas—ae Prose Tale, however short, in which human nature is unfaulded and elucidated—ae Essay even in the common language o' men—on Metaphoesics theirsels—let him pruve himsel to hae genius o' ony kind, and in ony depairtment, and then a body micht think wi' some temper on their blind and brutal abuse o' their betters, and their general denunciation o' a' the rest o' mankind as dunces or bigots. But what hae they got to shaw? No ae single scrawl fit for onything better than singin pou'try.

Mrs Gentle. I understand, sir, there are some very clever men among the Phrenologists.

Shepherd. There are some very clever men, Mem, in every oraal o' Hottentots, I'se warrant, in Caffrawria, as there are in every tent o' tinklers frae Yethelm. Tawlents o' a tolerable size you stumble on nowadays at the corner o' every street; and it would be a singular phenomenon if you couldna put your haun on the shouther o' a decent Phrenologist. But oh, Mem! but the creturs mak the maist o' ony moderate tawlents they may possess, or poo'r o' writin doun statements o' what they ca' facts;—and sure aneuch in conversation in company after denner—maist unhappy haverers are they over tumbler or jug—sae serious whan everybody else is jokin—sae close in their reasonin whan ither folk's minds are like bows unbent—sae argumentative on mere wunnle-straes flung up to see how the wund blaws—sae fairce gif you but gie a wee bit short good-natured grunt o' a lauch—sae tenawcious like grim death o' a syllogism o' ratiocination that you hae rugged out o' their nieve—sae fond o' damnable iteration, as Shakespeare says, for I never swear nane—sae dreigh and sae dour in a' they look, think, say, or do—sae bauld and bristly when they think they are beating you in logic, and sae crest-fallen and like cauves wi' their heads hanging ower the sides o' carts, when they find that ye are yerking it into them, and see that a' the company is kecklin;—in short, oh, dear me! Mem, Mrs Gentle! and you, my dear, Miss Mary! the Phrenologists are indeed a peculiar people, jealous o' good works, and wi' about as muckle sense amang them as micht furnish some half-dozen commissioners o' police per annum, twa-three druggists, an advocate callant no verra sair on the fees, and a couple o' stickit ministers. You'll hear them takin a sweepin view o' the History o' Metapheesics frae Thawles tae Tam Broon, establishin for themselves nae fewer than twa-and-throtty faculties, mainteenin that the knowledge o' human nature on the sceeance o' Mind is yet in its infancy—that a' the millions on millions o' men that thocht about their ain sowls since Noah, went blindfolded and ram-stam on the wrang road, with their backs towards the rising Sun o' Truth—and, to mak a lang story short, that Dr Gall, Dr Spurzheim, Mr George Combe, and Mr James Simpson, do now possess, within the circumference of their skulls, shallow and empty

as they are deemed to be by a weak and wicked generation, mair sense, knowledge, sceeance, truth, than all the other skulls belonging to the eight hundred and fifty million o' Christians, Pagans, Heathens, Jews, Turks, and the lave,[1] on continent or isle, a' ower the face, breast, and back o' the habitable yirth! Whoo—I am out o' breath—I wuss I had a drink. Did Tickler stir the noo? I howp he's no waukenin.

Mrs Gentle. Well, Mr Hogg, this is the first time in my life I ever saw Mr Tickler asleep. I fear he has been overpowered by the sun.

Shepherd. No, Mem—by soomin. He and I, and Bronte there, took a soom nearly out to Inchkeith—and no being accustomed to it for some years, he's unco comatose. There's no ae single thing in a' this warld that he's sae severe on in other folk as fa'in asleep in company—let them even hae sat up the haill nicht afore, ower bowl or book,—but that trance is like a judgment on him, and he'll be real wud[2] at me for no waukenin him, when he opens his een as the wheels stop, and he fin's that I've had baith the leddies a' the way up to mysel. But you can see him at ony time—whereas a sicht o' me in Awmrose's is gude for sair een, on an average only but ance a season. Mrs Gentle, did you ever see ony person sleep mair like a gentleman?

Mrs Gentle. Everything Mr Tickler does, Mr Hogg, is like a gentleman.

Shepherd. When he's dead he'll look like a gentleman. Even if ane could for a moment mak sic a supposition, he would look like a gentleman if he were hanged.

Mrs Gentle. O shocking!—My dear sir——

Shepherd. My admiration o' Mr Tickler has nae bounds, Mem. He would look like a gentleman in the stocks—or the jougs—or the present Ministry——

Mrs Gentle. I certainly never saw any person enter a drawing-room with an air of more courteous dignity, more heartfelt politeness, more *urbanity*, sir, a word, I believe, derived——

Shepherd. It's no ae man in fifty thousan' that's entitled to hae what's ca'd a mainner. Maist men, on entering a room, do weel just to sit doun on the first chair they lay their haun on—or to gang intil the window—or lean against the wa'—or keep lookin at pictures on a table—till the denner-bell rings. But Mr Tickler there—sax feet four—threescore and ten—

[1] *Lave*—remainder. [2] *Wud*—angry.

wi' heigh feturs[1]—white hair—ruddy cheeks—pairein een—naturally eloquent—fu' o' anecdote o' the olden time—independent in sowl, body, and estate,—geyan proud—a wee mad—rather deafish on the side of his head that happens to be neist a ninny—He, Mem, is entitled by nature and art to hae a mainner, and an extraordinar mainner sometimes it is[2]——

Mrs Gentle. I think Mr Tickler is about to shake off his drowsiness.

Tickler. Has that lazy fellow of a coachman not got all his parcels and passengers collected yet? "Is he never going to set off? Ay, there we go at last. This Portobello, Mrs Gentle, is really a wonderful place. That building reminds me of the Edinburgh Post-Office.

Shepherd. We're in Embro', sir, we're in Embro', and you've been snorin like a bittern or a frog in Tarras Moss.

Tickler. Ladies—can I hope ever to be pardoned for having fallen asleep in such presence? Yet, could I think that the guilt of sleep had been aggravated by being habit and repute a snorer,—suicide alone could——

Mrs Gentle. During your slumber, sir, you drew your breath as softly as a sleeping child.

Tickler. My offence, then, is not inexpiable.'

Shepherd. I am muckle obliged to you, sir, for sleepin—and I drew up the window on your side, that you michtna catch cauld; for, sir, though you draw your breath as saftly as a sleepin child, you hae nae notion how wide open you haud your mouth. You'll do the same for me another time.

[*The coach stops, and the* SHEPHERD *hands out* MISS GENTLE. —MR TICKLER *gallantly performing the same office to the Lady Mother.*

Bronte. Bow, wow, wow—bow, wow, wow. [*Scene closes.*

Scene III.—Mr Ambrose's Hotel, Picardy Place—Pilt Parlour.

MR NORTH *lying on a sofa, and* MR AMBROSE *fanning him with a Peacock's Tail.*

North. These window-ventilators, Mr Ambrose, are indeed admirable contrivances, and I must get them adopted at the Lodge. No wind that blows suits this room so well as the south-east. Do you think I might venture on another water-

[1] *Feturs*—features. [2] Mr Robert Sym is here painted to the life.

ice before dinner? The pine-apple we shall reserve. Thank you, Ambrose—that fan almost makes me melancholy. Demetrius was truly a splendid—a gorgeous—a glorious bird—and methinks I see him now affronting Phœbus with his thousand lidless eyes intensely bright within the emerald haze by which they were all encircled and overshadowed. Poor, dear, good old Lady Diana Le Fleming[1] gave him to me, that parricide might not be perpetrated in the Rydal woods. For the Prince had rebelled against the King his father, and driven old Poliorcetes[2] into the gloom of the forest. There, in some remote glade, accompanied in his dethroned exile but by one single Sultana, would he dare, as the echo of his ungrateful heir-apparent's triumphant cry was faint among the ancient oaks, to unfurl that Tail, Mr Ambrose, glorious even in the gloom, till, sick of tenderness, his pensive paramour stooped her crested head, and pressed her bosom to the mossy greensward before her enamoured lord, who, had he been more of a philosopher than I fear he was, would have been happy in the thought of "All for Love, or the World well Lost." No spectator there of such caresses but the wild-bee, too busy amidst the sylvan blooms to behold even the birds of Juno—or the squirrel leaping among the mossy branches of that endless canopy—or the lovely adder trailing his burnished undulations along the forest flowers—or snow-white coney all intent on his own loves, the happy father he of monthly families all the year long, retiring at the far-off rustle of footstep into his old hereditary palace, beneath the roots of elm or ash five centuries old! Solemn woods they were indeed, my good Ambrose, in those days—but oh! that the axe should ever be laid to the root of the Bright, the Beautiful, the Bold, the Free, the Great, the Young or the Old! Let hurricanes level lanes through forests, as plagues do through the families of men, for Nature may work at will with her own elements among her own creations, but why must man for ever destroy? nor, child of a day, fear to murder the Tree that stands green yet gloomy in its strength, beside the mouldering mausoleum it has for ages overshadowed, and that is now but a heap of dust and ashes? Hark! the timepiece sweetly strikes, as

[1] A daughter of the Earl of Suffolk: married to Sir Michael Le Fleming of Rydal Hall, Westmoreland. Rydal Mount, for so long the residence of Wordsworth, is a portion of this estate.

[2] Demetrius, surnamed *Poliorcetes*, or the Besieger, was defeated, and kept in confinement, by his son-in-law Seleucus.

with a silver bell, the hour of five!—Cease your fanning, mine host most worthy—and let the dinner appear—for ere a man, with moderate haste, might count a hundred, Tickler and the Shepherd will be in the presence. Ay, God bless his honest soul, there is my dear James's laugh in the lobby.

(*Enter* SHEPHERD *and* TICKLER *and* BRONTE.)

Shepherd. Here I am, sir, gloriously hungry. My stamach, Mr North, as weel's my heart, 's in the richt place. I'm nae glutton—nae gormandeezer—but a man o' a gude—a great appeteet—and for the next half-hour I shall be as perfectly happy as ony man in a' Scotland.

Tickler. Take a few biscuits, James, till——

Shepherd. Biskits! I could crunch the haill tot o' them like sae mony wafers. Rax me ower ane o' thae cabin-biskits o' a man-o'-war—there—smash into flinders flees it at ae stroke o' my elbow—but here comes the ROOND!

North. Mr Ambrose, I ordered a cold dinner——

Shepherd. A cauld denner! Wha the deevil in his seven senses wad condescend to sit doun till a cauld denner! Hail, Hotch-potch! What a Cut o' Sawmon! That maun hae been a noble fish! Come forrit, my wee chiel, wi' the chickens, and you bigger callant, wi' the tongue and ham. Tak tent, ye auld dominee, and no scale the sass o' the sweet-breads! Curry's a gran' thing, geyan late on in a denner, when the edge o' the appeteet's a wee turned, and you're rather beginnin to be stawed.[1] Mr Awmrose, I'll thank ye to lend me a pocky-haundkershief, for I've forgotten mine in my wallise, and my mouth's waterin. There, Mr North, there—set in his fit-stule aneath the table. I ca' this, sir, a tastefu' and judicious denner for three. Whisht, sirs. "God bless us in these mercies, and make us truly thankful. Amen!"

Tickler. Hodge-podge, Hogg?

Shepherd. Only three ladlefu's.—Mair pease. Dip deeper. —That's it.

North. Boiling broth, with the thermometer at eighty!

Shepherd. I carena if the fermometer war at aught hunder and aughty. I'll eat het hotch-potch against Mosshy Shaubert[2] —only I'll no gae intil the oven—neither will I eat arsenick or phosphorus.

[1] *Stawed*—satiated.

[2] A fire-eater of those days. He could handle, it is said, red-hot iron, and enter with impunity an oven in which beef-steaks were cooking.

North. I should like, James, to introduce my friend Dr Dodds to M. Chabert.

Shepherd. Wha's he?

North. The ingenious gentleman who was packed in ice below an avalanche in Switzerland for some century and a half, and who, on being dug out and restored to animation before a rousing wood-fire, merely complained of a slight numbness in his knees, and a tingling at the points of his fingers.[1]

Shepherd. Oh, man! hoo he must hae enjoyed the first het denner! I think I see him ower his first jug o' het toddy. They tell me he has gotten himsel married—has he ony family?

Tickler. Mr Hogg, a glass of wine?

Shepherd. No the noo. I am for some mair o' the hotch-potch. Mr Awmrose, gie me a deeper ashet.—I wunner to see ye, Mr North, fiddle-faddlin awa at cauld lamb and mint sass. —I just perfectly abhor mint sass.

North. My dear James, you must have had the shower-bath to-day.

Shepherd. Confound your shower-baths, and your vapour-baths, and your slipper-baths, and your marble-coffin-baths, and your Bath-baths—"Give me," as my ingenious freen, the author o' the *Cigar* and *Life after Dark*, spiritedly says, "give me the broad bosom of the blue sea, with five fathom of water beneath me;" the Firth o' Forth to frisk in, sir—the lips o' the wide mouth o' the German Ocean to play with—where, as Tennant says,

"Breaks the long wave that at the Pole began."

Noo, Mr Tickler, my hotch-potch is dune, and I'll drink a pint o' porter wi' you frae the tap.

[Mr Ambrose *places the pewter.*

North. The *Cigar*, James, and *Every Night Book, or Life after Dark*, are extremely clever and amusing. Who?[2]

Shepherd. The same. He's a wutty fallow. I wush he was here.

North. Is the *Age Reviewed*, James, any shakes of a satire?

[1] A story to this effect was current at the time.

[2] The American editor states that the name of the author of these books was William Clarke.

Shepherd. Some o' the belly, sir. I prefer the belly o' a sawmon and the back o' a cod. What's your wull?

North. I gave you the *Age Reviewed* yestreen to peruse, James. Eh?

Shepherd. He's a sumph, the author. He leads a body in the preface to expeck that he's gaun to be personal, and malevolent, and rancorous, and a' that; and instead o' that, he's only stupit.

Tickler. I gave the drivel a glance—wretched stuff. The dolt is not aware that "The Age" goes farther back in time than about the year 1812, or extends in space beyond London and suburbs.

Shepherd. He might as weel hae ca'd a drill o' twa-three tailors and weavers—makin into volunteers—a review o' the British army. It's curious how many sumphs become satirists.

North. What a rare faculty 'tis, James, cutting-up.

Shepherd. Ye may say that, wi' a pig's tail in your cheek, Mr North; for, savin and exceppin your ain single sel, there's no a man noo, either in the Fleet or the Army, or the Church, or the Courts o' Law, or the Parliament, that knows how to hawnle a cat-o'-nine-tails.

North. My dear Shepherd, you forget—my instrument is the KNOUT.

Shepherd. What maist surprises and pleases me, sir, is that your richt hand never forgets its cunnin. You'll maybe no tak your KNOUT intil't for a year at a time; and the next culprit that has his head tied ower a post, hewps your haun 'ill be weak or ackward; but, my faith, he sune kens better; for at every stripe o' the inevitable and inexorable whang, the skin flipes aff frae nape to hurdies—and the Cockney confesses that Christopher North is still, septuagenarian though he be, the First Leevin Satirist o' the age. I wud like to see you, sir, by way o' vareeity, pented by John Watson Gordon, in the character o' Apollo flayin Marsyas.—Noo for the *Roond*. Thank ye, Mr Tickler—some udder.—Awmrose, Dickson's mustard.

Tickler. May-Fair,[1] North, is clever.

North. Very much so. But I do not fancy light-hitting—and showy sparring of that sort. Give me a desperate lunge at the kidneys.

Tickler. The auther is not a man of fashion—although he

[1] *May-Fair*, in Four Cantos. By W. H. AINSWORTH. London, 1827.

would fain be thought one.—Dress—speak—laugh—bow—sit—walk,—blow your nose as fashionably as you can—unless you are *bona fide* of the ton—it is all in vain. You are soon seen to be a forgery.

North. Yet the author is a gentleman and a scholar.

Tickler. I dislike altogether these ambling octo-syllabics. 'Tis a pitiful pace.

North. Rather so. But what chiefly annoyed me in *May-Fair*, was its author's assumed easiness of air,—his nonchalance in speaking of his titled friends,—his hand-in-glove familiarity with my Lord Holland,—and above all, the unconscious pomposity with which he, a gay and airy trifler, treats of matters utterly uninteresting to all mankind except perhaps about three people.

Shepherd. Nae mair about it. I read a skreed o't in the *Literary Gazette*, but didna understand ae single word o't, wi' its blanks, and its allusions, and its alleeterations. The author thinks himsel a great wut, nae doubt, but he's only middlin,—and it's no worth while "takin the conceit out o' him," for he'll no reach another edition. The Lunnon creturs imagine a' the warld's aye thinkin about them,—but naebody in Yarrow minds them. May-Fair at Selkrig's a different bizziness, and wad mak a grand poem, either serious or sateerical, or baith at ance, like the wabster's widow.

Tickler. Pray, North, did you see Tom Campbell[1] when he was lately in Edinburgh?

North. I did not. He was to have dined with me, when a summons—from Colburn, I suppose—carried him off by steam to London.

Tickler. Our worthy friends, the people of the West Country, did themselves infinite credit by their cordial reception of their Bard and Rector.

North. They did so indeed. Campbell's speeches and addresses on his Installation on the First of May, and at the Public Dinner, contained many very happy touches—apt, ingenious, hearty, and graceful.

Tickler. You heard, I presume, that the Gander[2] tried to

[1] Thomas Campbell was Lord Rector of the University of Glasgow in 1827.

[2] The Glasgow "Gander" was a Mr Douglas. Among his other social misdemeanours he was addicted to abusing Sir Walter Scott at public dinners. See afterwards, Noctes for March 1831.

disturb the genial feeling of sympathy and admiration by his Goose-dub gabble, but got hissed and hooted back to his green-mantled pool?

North. I noticed, with pleasure, an able castigation of the creature in the *Scots Times;* and it is agreeable to know, that the illustrious Author of the *Pleasures of Hope* cut him dead. In England, such baseness would be held incredible. Yet, plucked as he is of every feather, and bleeding all over, he struts about in the same mock majesty as ever, and construes pity and contempt into keudos and glorification.

Shepherd. I dinna ken wha you're speakin about. But wha wull the College laddies make Rector neist? I'll tell you wha they should eleck.

North. Whom, James?

Shepherd. Just yoursel. They've had a dynasty of Whigs—Jaffrey, and Sir James Mackintosh, and Brougham, and Cammell—and noo they should hae a dynasty o' Tories. THE FIRST GREAT TORY RECTOR SHOULD BE CHRISTOPHER NORTH.

North. No—no—no, James. *Nolo Episcopari.* ..

Shepherd. What for no? Haud your tongue. I'll mak an appeal to the laddies, and your election is sure. First, you're the auldest Tory in Scotland—secondly, you're the bauldest Tory in Scotland—thirdly, you're the wuttiest Tory in Scotland—fourthly, you're the wisest Tory in Scotland. That Tammas Cammell is a mair popular poet than you, sir, I grant; but that he has ae tenth pairt o' your poetical genius, I deny. As a miscellawneous writer on a' subjects human and divine, he is no to be named wi' you, sir, in the same lifetime—and as an EDITOR, he is, compared wi' CHRISTOPHER NORTH—but as a spunk to the Sun!

Tickler. Rector! a glass of hock or sauterne?

North. Mr Ambrose, the Peacock's Tail, if you please. The room is getting very hot.

Shepherd. Oh, sir, but you look bonny when you blush. I can conceeve a virgin o' saxteen fa'in in love wi' you—Rector, your good health. Mr Awmrose, fill the Rector's glass. Oh, sir, but you wad luk gran' in your robs. Jaffrey and Cammell's but peehs[1] to you—the verra stoop o' your shouthers would be dignified aneath a goon—the gait o' the gout is unco philosophical—and wi' your crutch in your nieve, you would

[1] *Peehs*—pigmies.

seem the Champion o' Truth, ready either to defend the passes against the wily assaults of Falsehood, or to follow her into her ain camp, storm the intrenchments, and slaughter her whole army o' sceptics.—Mr Awmrose, gie me a clean plate—I'm for some o' the curried kernels.

North. I have some thoughts, James, of relinquishing animal food, and confining myself, like Sir Richard Phillips, to vegetable matter.

Shepherd. Ma troth, sir, there are mony millions o' Sir Richard Phillipses in the world, if a' that's necessary to make ane be abstinence frae animal food. It's my belief, that no aboon ane in ten o' mankind at large, pree animal food frae week's end to week's end. Sir Richard Phillips, on that question, is in a great majority.

Tickler. North, accustomed, James, all his life, to three courses — fish, flesh, and fowl — would think himself an absolute phenomenon or miracle of man, were he to devote the remainder of his meals to potatoes and barley bannocks, pease-soup, macaroni, and the rest of the range of bloodless but sappy nature. How he would be laughed at for his heroic resolution, if overheard by three million strapping Irish beggars, with their bowels yearning for potatoes and potheen!

North. No quizzing, boys, of the old gentleman. Talking of Sir Richard Phillips, I am sorry he is no longer—to my knowledge at least—the Editor of a Magazine. In his hands the *Monthly* was a valuable periodical. One met with information there, that nowadays I, at least, know not where to look for—and though the Knight's own scientific speculations were sometimes sufficiently absurd, they, for the most part, exhibited the working of a powerful and even original mind.

Shepherd. I agree wi' him in thinkin Sir Isaac Newton out o' his reckonin entirely about gravitation. There's nae sic thing as a law o' gravitation! What would be the use o't? Wull onybody tell me, that an apple or a stane wudna fa' to the grun' without sic a law? Sumphs that say sae! They fa' to the grun' because they're heavy.

North. I also liked Sir Richard's politics.

Shepherd. Haw!!!

North. He was consistent, James—and my mind is so constituted as always to connect together the ideas of consistency and conscientiousness. In his criticisms on literature and the

fine arts, he appeared to me generally to say what he thought the truth—and although sometimes manifestly swayed in his judgment on such matters, like almost all other men, by his political predilections, his pages were seldom if ever tainted with malignity; and, on the whole, Dick was a fair foe.

Tickler. He was the only Editor, sir, that ever clearly saw the real faults and defects of Maga, and therefore although he sometimes blamed, he never abused her——

Shepherd. That's a gude distinction, Mr Tickler, either about books or bodies. When ae man hates anither, and has a spite at him, he never fastens on his real fauts, blackguardin him for acks he never thocht o' a' his days, and confoundin the verra natures o' vice and virtue. The sight o' a weel-faur'd lauchin face—like mine for example—gies the puir distorted deevil the jaundice—and he gangs up and doun the toun mainteenin that your cheeks is yellow, when they're cherries, till some freen or ither taks him aside in pity intil a corner, and advises him to tak a purge, for he's unco sick o' the okre distemper.

North. Gentlemen, cheese?

Shepherd. Na, na—nae cheese. Cheese is capital in the forenoons, or the afternoons either, when you've had nae ither denner, especially wi' fresh butter and bread; but nane but gluttonous epicures wad hae recourse to it after they hae been stuffin themsels, as we hae noo been doin for the last hour, wi' three coorses, forbye hotch-potch and puddins.—Draw the cloth, Mr Awmrose, and down wi' the Deevil's Punch-Bowl.

North. You will find, I trust, that it breathes the very Spirit of the West. St Mungo's cathedral, you know, is at the bottom—and near it the monument of John Knox—almost as great a reformer in his day as I in mine; and had the West India trade then flourished, no doubt he had been as religiously devoted to cold Glasgow Punch. I'll answer for him, that he was no milk-sop.

[Mr Ambrose *and Assistants deposit the Devil's Punch-Bowl in the centre of the circular table.*

North. The King.

Shepherd. I took the hips frae you last time, Mr North,—tak you the hips frae me this time.

North. We will, James. But see that this bowl does not take the legs from you likewise.

Omnes. Hip—hip—hip—hurra—hurra—hurra—hip—hip—hip—hurra—hurra—hurra—hip—hip—hip—hurra—hurra—hurra!

Shepherd. Hoo the "Universal British Nation" lately stood up, like ae man, to stamp the seal o' its approbation on the conduct o' Eldon, Wellington, Melville, Peel, and the lave o' our patriotic statesmen!

North. "England! with all thy faults, I love thee still!" There is one toast, gentlemen, that we have often drank with pleasure—yea, with pride. Let us do so now—in silence. "THE PRESS."

Tickler. Instead of pleasure and pride, I for one drink that toast with pain and shame. The persons of the press pretend indignation at the charge urged against them by the Marquess of Londonderry, of being bribed and corrupted by ministerial money. Some of them are Political Economists, and must know the meaning of the word money. But if not so bribed and corrupted, whence their tergiversation and apostasy? From the native baseness of their souls?

Shepherd. I think that's the maist likely.

Tickler. The Whig papers are not so double-damned as the Tory ones. The *Times*, and the *Morning Chronicle*, and the *Globe*, might be defended by a good Devil's Advocate in a silk-gown, given him by a patent of precedency; but for the *Courier*—for the once gentlemanly, judicious, well-informed, clear-headed, and seemingly right-hearted Englishman the *Courier*—to fling from him, unbribed, and unbought, and uncorrupted, the honourable reputation he had gained by long years of earnest and zealous services in the cause of his country and her greatest men, is deplorable indeed; and had his apostasy been less flagrant and barefaced, the renegade might, by force of character, have done much mischief to the State.[1]

North. You speak well, sir—the infatuated craven was

[1] The *Courier* had been the organ of the high Tory party. But when Canning obtained the reins of government, greatly to the dissatisfaction of the majority of that party, this paper sided with the Premier, and no longer advocated its former principles.

called on for his defence, "but the trembling coward, who forsook his master," was at first tongue-tied, then stuttered an unintelligible palinode, and finally strove in vain to inflict as sore a wound on the patience as on the principles of the public, by a series of paragraphs ashamed of their own truckling imbecility, and anxious to crawl away from contempt into oblivion.

Tickler. For fifteen years was the *Courier* laid duly every morning on my breakfast-table, and I asked no better Journal. It is gone—and the *Standard* has taken its place. But not soon—if ever—will the *Standard* freshen for me even a town-bought egg, as the *Courier* did so long; nor, at my time of life, am I fond of changing an old friend for a new. But if an old friend will desert me—and himself—and all that ever bound us in amity—"if he prove Haggard, then whistle him down the wind"—I forget the quotation—James——

Shepherd. Why, sir, let him go to the devil and shake himself.

North. I still have a kindness for him—and I shall never again utter a syllable against him—may he repent for seven years in sackcloth and ashes;—at the close of that term, I may again become a subscriber—till then—

"Therefore, eternal silence be his doom!"

Shepherd. The press? What! is there nae ither Press than the periodical? Nae ither periodicals but newspapers? Thank God, sir, the laws and liberties o' this great kintra depend not for existence or vitality on ony sic ingine—although I grant, that when, by the chances o' time and tide, they collapse, that ingine blaws up and inflates their lungs, and sets them ance mair breathin or hoastin. Sic an ingine, I opine, is the *St James's Chronicle*, which gangs through the Forest thrice a-week, like a fine bauld purifyin wund, and has, to my knowledge, changed the sour sallow cheek o' mair than ae radical—for we hae the breed on the Braes o' Yarrow—into the open rosy countenance o' a kirk-and-constitution man, cheerfully payin his teinds to the minister's steepen, and hatin the Pope's Ee, except when he sees't glowerin at him frae a shank o' mutton.

North. The well-being of a State is wholly dependent on the character of a people, James; and I agree with you in

thinking that the character of a people is not entirely formed by newspapers.

Tickler. Some sixty years since, few persons in Scotland, out of Edinburgh, ever saw a newspaper but the *Caledonian Mercury*—a good paper yet; but were not the Scottish people then, as now, a "nation of gentlemen"?

Shepherd. A daft-lookin nation would that be, Mr Tickler; but, thank God, there never was ower mony gentlemen in Scotland, and them there was had nae connection in ony way wi' the newspaper-press. For my ain pairt, I never peruse what's ca'd the leadin article in a newspaper—and, to speak the truth, I'm geyan shy o' them in a magazine too—but I devoor the adverteesements, which, beside lettin you ken everything that's gaun on in a kintra respectin the sellin and nifferin o' property, baith in hooses and lands, are to my mind models o' composition, without ae single unnecessary word, for every word's paid for, and that gies the adverteeser a habit o' conceese thocht and expression, better than a Logic class.

Tickler. Writing in Magazines, and speaking in Parliament, have quite an opposite effect—making the world wordy.

Shepherd. An' preachin's warst of a'. A popular preacher has a' his ain way in the poupit, like a bill in a cheena-shop. He's like a river in spate—drumly-drumly, and you can hear naethin else for his deafenin roar. Meet wi' him, neist day, in a preevat pairty, and you wudna ken him to be the same man. He's like the river run out—dry and staney, and you wunner hoo you could hae been sae frightened at him rampagin——

North. A sermon should never exceed twenty-five minutes —nor——

Tickler. A horse-race two miles. Four-mile heats are tiresome—to horse, rider, and spectator.

Shepherd. Great poupit orators are aften geyan stupit in conversation. The pleasantest orators o' my acquaintance, the maist sensible and instructin in society, are them that just preaches weel aneuch to satisfy folk in the kirk, without occasionin ony great gossip about their discourse in the kirkyard. There's a harmony atween their doctrine and their daily life that tells in the long-run a' ower the parish; but it's nae easy maitter, indeed it's unpossible, for your hee-fleers to ack in preevat as they ack in public—in the parlour as in the poupit.

Tickler. The bawling bashaw, James, may become an abject mute—a tyrant on the Sabbath—through the week-days a slave.

Shepherd. Scoldin a' his heritors when preachin—lickin the dust aff their shoes when dinin in their houses——

North. Whisht—James—whisht—you know my respect for the Scottish clergy; and among the high-flyers, as you call them, are some of our most splendid orators and useful ministers.

Shepherd. Whisht yoursel, Mr North. You've spoken twa words for my ane the day. But tell me, sir, did you gang to see Mr Tay Pay Cooke, in "The Pilot"? Did ye ever see the like o' yon?

North. The best Sailor, out of all sight and hearing, that ever trod the stage.

Shepherd. Do ye ca' yon treddin the stage? Yon's no treddin. When he first loupit out o' the boat on the dry laun', tryin to steady himsel on his harpoon, he garred me fin' the verra furm aneath me in the pit shooin up and down, as if the earth were lowsen'd frae her moorins. I grew amaist sea-sick.

North. Nothing overdone—no bad bye-play, blabbing of the land-lubber—not too much pulling up of the trousers—no ostentatious display of pig-tail—one chuck of tobacco into his cheek, without any perceptible chaw, sufficient to show that next to grog the quid is dear—no puling, no whining, when on some strong occasion he pumps his eye, but merely a slight choking of that full, deep, rich mellow voice, symphonious, James, in all its keys with the ocean's, whether piping in the shrouds, or blowing great guns, running up, James, by way of pastime, the whole gamut—and then, so much heart and soul, James, in minute particulars, justifying the most passionate exhibition when comes crisis or catastrophe——

Shepherd. What for do you no mention the hornpipe? I wad gie fifty pounds to be able to dance yon way. Faith, I wad astonish them at kirns. Haw! haw! haw! The way he twists the knees o' him—and rins on his heels—and doun to the floor wi' a wide spread-eagle amaist to his verra doup—up again like mad, and awa aff intil some ither nawtical muvement o' the hornpipe, bafflin a' comprehension as to its meanin; and then a' the while siccan a face! I wush I kent him—he maun be a fine fallow.

North. A gentleman, James.

Shepherd. That's aneuch—I never can help carryin ontil the stage my knowledge o' an actor's preevat character—and I couldna thole to see a drunken, dishonest neerdoweel actin sic a pairt as Lang Tam in "The Pilot."

North. I believe such a thing would be impossible. Mr Cooke served in the navy in his boyhood, and fought in the glorious battle off Cape St Vincent. But all his experience of a sea-life, and all his genius, would have been vain, had he not possessed within his own heart the virtues of the British tar. That gives a truth, a glow of colouring to his picture of Long Tom—just, my dear James, as if you were to act the principal part in that little Piece of mine, the Ettrick Shepherd.

Tickler. What impostor, dearest James, could personate a certain Pastor in the Noctes Ambrosianæ——

Shepherd. Is Mr Gurney gotten intil the press again?

North. James, I wish you would write the Monthly Dramatic Review for Maga?

Shepherd. Hoo can I do that, leevin in the Forest?

North. Poo—I will send you out the *Journal*, and the *Mercury*, and the *Observer*, and the *Chronicle*, who have all "a strong propensity for the drama," and you can give us the cream of Acris, and Vindex, and Fair Play, and a Friend of Rising Merit, and Philo, and Vox Populi, and a Pittite, and A. and Y., and P. Q.——

Shepherd. I wad rather undertak to sen' you in creeteeks on a' the sermons preach'd every Sawbath in a' the kirks in Embro'—provided you just send me out the texts, and twa-three o' the heads, wi' the ministers' names labell'd.

North. Something of that sort, James, was attempted in London, in a periodical called *The Pulpit*. Yet, would you believe it, not one of the contributors ever went to church. They had each his old woman in her pew, with whom they took a glass of gin-and-water for an hour of the Sunday evening, before going to the Pig and Whistle, and thus got the materials for a general weekly Review of the Pulpit Eloquence of the Metropolis.

Shepherd. Safe us! what a shame! There's nae settin boun's to the wickedness o' the gentlemen o' the press. To creeticeese a minister in the poupit—and describe his face and

his vice, and the action o' his hauns, and his way o' managin the whites o' his een, without ever ha'in been in his kirk! It's fearsome.

North. The wickedness of the whole world, James, is fearsome. Many a sleepless night I pass thinking of it, and endeavouring to digest plans for the amelioration of my species.

Shepherd. A' in vain, a' in vain! The bit wean at its mother's breast, lang afore it can speak, girns like an imp o' sin; and the auld man, sittin palsied and pillow-prapped in his arm-chair at the neuk o' the fire, grows black i' the face wi' rage, gin his parritch is no richt biled, or the potawties ower hard; and prefaces his mummled prayer wi' a mair mummled curse.

Tickler. Your language, James, has been particularly strong all this evening. The sea is bracing.

Shepherd. Honour and honesty! Wha ever saw them staun a real trial? The Platonic Philosopher seduces the sister o' the brither o' his soul—the "noblest work o' God"[1] receives a' the poor people's money in the parish, and becomes a bankrupt.

North. It is only among women, my dear James, that anything is to be found deserving the name of virtue or religion.

Shepherd. The lassie o' saxteen 'ill rin awa wi' a tinkler, and break her father's heart. He dees, and his poor disconsolate widow, wha has worn a deep black veil for a towmont, that she mayna see or be seen by the sun, marries an Eerish sodger, and neist time you see her, she has naething on her head but a dirty mutch, and she's gaun up and doun the street half-fou, wi' an open bosom, sucklin twuns!

Tickler. Ephesian matron!

Shepherd. Gie an advocate bizziness whan he's starvin, at the tap o' a common stair, wull he help you to fit out your son for India when he has become a Judge, inhabiting a palace in Moray Place? Gie a preacher a kirk, and in three months he insults his pawtron. Buy up a naitural son, step by step, in the airmy, till he's a briggadeer, and he'll disoun his ain father, and pretend that he belangs to a distant branch o' the stem o' some noble family—although, aiblins, he never had on stockins till he was ensign, and up to the date o' his first

[1] "An *honest* man's the noblest work of God."

commission herded the kye. Get a reprieve for a rubber the nicht afore execution, and he sall celebrate the anniversary o' his Free Pardon in your pantry, carryin aff wi' him a silver trencher and the branching cawnlesticks. Review a new poet in *Blackwood's Magazine*, roosin[1] him to the skies, and he or his freens 'ill accuse you o' envy and jealousy, and libel you in the *Scotsman*. In short, do a' the gude you can to a' mankind, and naebody 'ill thank you. But come nearer to me, Mr North—lend me your ear, sir, it's richt it sud be sae—for, let a man luk into his ain heart—the verra man—me—or you—or Mr Tickler there—that has been lamentin ower the original sin o' our fellow-creturs,—and oh! what a sicht does he see there—just a mass o' corruption! We're waur than the warst o' them we hae been consignin to the pit, and grue to peep ower the edge o't, lest Satan, wha is stannin girnin ahint our back, gie us a dunge when we're no mindin, and bury us in the brimstone.

Tickler. Oh, ho, gents—from libelling individuals, you two are now advancing to libel human nature at large. For my own part, I have a most particular esteem for human nature at large—and——

Shepherd. Your views is no scriptural, Mr Tickler. The Bible Society could tell you better——

Tickler. The British and Foreign Bible Society? Dr Andrew Thomson[2] has given the Directors a most complete squabash; and I am glad to see the monstrous abuses of which they have been guilty reprobated in a calm and sensible article in the last admirable number of the *Quarterly Review.*

North. Into what sacred place will not Mammon find entrance? Well done, Dr Leander Van Ess, agent at Darmstadt! For fifteen years, James, has the Professor been in the annual receipt of three hundred and sixty pounds—which, in Germany, James, is equivalent to about a thousand a-year in the Forest.

Shepherd. Safe us! what for doin?

North. Distributing the Scriptures among the Roman Catholics of Germany, James.

[1] *Roosin*—praising.

[2] Dr Andrew Thomson, minister of St George's Church, Edinburgh—a vigorous preacher, and author of several volumes of sermons—died in 1831.

Shepherd. Greedy houn'! chargin siller for geein a puir benichted beggar body a grawtis copy o' the Word o' God!

North. A gratis copy, my dear James! Stop a bit. The Doctor is himself the principal proprietor of the version which he has for so many years been circulating at the expense of the Society; and during his connection with it he has circulated six hundred thousand! Take his profit ten per cent, James, and the Doctor must be worth a plum.

Shepherd. Oh the greedy houn'!

North. "Leander Van Ess," quoth the Seventeenth Report, "seeks no earthly emoluments; nor is the applause of a vain world his aim; he desires not the treasures which rust and moth consume. No; the glory of God, and the salvation of souls, these are the pure and heavenly principles which influence his mind and stimulate his actions."

Shepherd. And hypocrites like thae will abuse us for dinin at Awmrose's and discussin the interests o' mankind, ower the Deevil's Punch-Bowl!

Tickler. And were the Doctor, under the pretence of piety and erudition, to make one with us of a *partie carrée*, he would sham pauper, and——

Shepherd. Look anither airt whan the bill cam in!

North. James, refresh and revive your soul by reference to the proceedings of the Assembly's Scheme for Establishing Schools in our own Highlands. There is pure enlightened Christian philanthropy, without fee or reward.

Shepherd. A' the Heelanders want is but better schulin, and some mair kirks—

North. And they are getting both, James. Why, this Society alone, with its very moderate funds, has already established between thirty and forty schools!

Shepherd. Hae they indeed? They sall hae their reward here and hereafter. I hope they dinna despise the applause o' a vain warld like Dr Yes—nor yet yearthly emoliments—nor yet the treasures which rust and moth consume. The applause o' a vain warld's an unco pleasant and encouragin thing, as I experienced when I published the *Queen's Wake*, and veese versa when I put out the *Perils*—and as for the Moths—they hae gotten intil every chest o' drawers, and a' the presses at Mount Benger, and riddled twa coats and three pair o' breeks

till they're no wearable. Could ye no gie me a reecate for extirpatin the clan, sir?

Tickler. Write for one, James, to the said German quack—Dr Leander Van Ess.

Shepherd. Howsomever, moths are naething to bugs, and thank Heaven there's nane o' them in the Forest. But wha's at the head o' the Assembly's Scheme for Educating the Highlans, sir?

North. Principal Baird,[1] James.

Shepherd. That's just like himsel—never happy but when he's doin good.

North. You have drawn his character, James, in three words. And as he is always doing good——

Shepherd. Why, then, he maun aye be happy.

North. Sound doctrine. Truly happy was I to see and hear him, during the time of the General Assembly, getting without seeking it, and enjoying without overvaluing it, "the applause of a vain world!" Edinburgh rung with his praises—from peers and judges to the cadie at the corner of the street.

Shepherd. A' the cauddies are Heelanders; and faith they'll ken, for they read the papers, that the Principal lo'es their land o' mists and mountains, and is pruvin his love by geein the Gael education, the only thing wanting to equaleeze them with the Sassenach.

North. A scheme, James, in which all good men must rejoice to unite. No wasting of funds here,—but one Secretary, and he the best one,—all subscriptions applied directly to the noble work in hand. Patriotism strengthens what religion and humanity inspire, and the blessings conferred on the poor Highlanders will gladden the eyes of the mere prospect-hunter in search of the beautiful and picturesque, who will see with deeper emotions the smoke-wreaths winding up to heaven from cottages whose humble inmates have learned the way thither from lessons that might never have been taught them but for the labours of this excellent man, and the other enlightened and zealous Divines leagued with him in the same sacred work.

Shepherd. Every word you say, sir, is the truth. Pity—

[1] Dr George H. Baird, the then Principal of the University of Edinburgh: he died in 1840.

nay, shame—to think that there should be ae single man, woman, or child in a' Scotland, to whom the Bible is a sealed book.

North. Charity should begin at home, James—although it should not end there—and I confess it would grieve me to think that the Mohawks should all be reading away at Teyoninhokarawen's translation of the Bible, while thousands on thousands of the natives of Lochaber and Badenoch were unable to read that of Dr Stewart of Luss.

Tickler. Yet I cannot, I confess, go entirely along with the Quarterly Reviewer, when he objects to all Translations of the Scriptures not executed by accomplished Greek and Hebrew scholars. That a man should be at once a profound Hebraist and a first-rate Mohawk, is not only against the doctrine of chances, but the laws of nature. Better the Bible with many errors, than no Bible at all.

North. Perhaps, Tickler, we are getting out of our depths.

Shepherd. Gettin out o' your deepth! Ma faith, Mr North, when ye get out o' your deepth, ither folk 'ill be drooning—when the water's up to your chin there 'll be a sair jinglin in maist throats; and when it's risen out-ower your nose, sir, there'll be naething less than a universal deluge.

Tickler. The newspapers have been lately filled with contemptible libel-actions, I observe, North. How does Maga escape?

North. A dog of any sense, finding a kettle tied to his tail, sneaks into a close in town, or lane in the country, and sitting down on his encumbered and jingling rump, whines on some benevolent Howard to untie the tin. It is done, and the cur repairs to his kennel, without farther yelp to the public. A dog of no sense scampers along the street, himself a whole band of instrumental music, knocking the kettle against every shin that kicks him, till his master, a greater fool than himself, insists on reparation, and summons the impugnor of the cynic system to a Court of Justice, savage for damages. It has so happened that the curs I have occasionally so treated have been of the former class, and have found their advantage in such conduct, for I thenceforth spared them; and they all know me when they meet me on the street, some of them even wagging their tails in approbation of my past severity, and gratitude for my present forbearance.

Tickler. Soane was silly in bringing an action against an article in *Knight's Quarterly Magazine.*

North. Truly so. He is a good architect, Soane, and may therefore laugh at being called a bad one. Not a bad idea—the Bœotian order of architecture. Is *Knight's Quarterly Magazine* dead, think ye, Tickler?

Tickler. I fear so. But some of the contributors, I believe, are yet alive—so is Knight himself, I am glad to see—and I wish him all prosperity, for he is a very gentlemanly person—a man of honour and abilities.

North. Poor Parry, too! Fifty pounds won't pay his attorney. I remember being so far taken in with that book of his about Byron, as to think it authentic. And I am not sure now that most of the matter is not true. It would appear from the trial, that a Mr Thomas Hodgkin had a hand in the composition of it—and if he kept to Parry's oral or written statements, which I think there is reason to suppose he did, where's the harm? Mr Hodgkin, I believe, was once in the navy—and his lectures on Political Economy before the Mechanics' Institution, though full of untenable positions, show him to be a man of talent. From his having been appointed Secretary to the Mechanical Institution it is but fair to suppose that he is a person of character—and if he did put together Parry's book,[1] why, that is a reason with me for crediting its statements. As for malignity towards Byron and Bentham, that is all stuff. Of the first, Parry speaks like a Caulker—and of Jeremy and his trotting, the description is extremely humorous and picturesque. The *Examiner* used too strong language by far in calling him a sot, a bully, and a coward—although his defence was manly and tolerably effective.

Tickler. Stanhope[2] spoke out.

North. He was a good witness, and rebuffed Serjeant Taddy like a gentleman. The Colonel, two-three years ago, being displeased with an article in Maga, spoke in the *Oriental Herald* of "Blackwood's friend the Caulker." Now, to this

[1] *The Last Days of Lord Byron*, by William Parry, reviewed in *Blackwood's Magazine*, No. CIII. I believe that Parry brought an action against the *Examiner* for defamation.

[2] Afterwards the Earl of Harrington. He was the agent in Greece of the London Greek Committee; and if the review in *Blackwood*, referred to in the preceding note, is to be trusted, he was not of much service to the cause.

hour, Mr Blackwood has never seen Parry, whereas it appears from the Colonel's own testimony t'other day in Court, that the said Caulker dined daily, for months, at his table; and on being asked, "was he a sober man or a sot?" he answered, "a sot." Poor Stanhope! What a fine thing to be a Greek Patriot!

Tickler. Do you never feel any sort of irritation on being attacked yourself, North?

North. Very seldom, for I am seldom or never in the wrong. There are eight ways of dealing with an assailant.—First, Notice not the insect's existence, and at night in the course of nature he dies.—Secondly, Catch and crush him in your hand.—Thirdly, Let him buzz about, till the smell of honey tempts him down the neck of a bottle—cork him up, he fizzes; and is mute.—Fourthly, To leave that metaphor, put the point of your pen through the eye of the scribbler into the rotten matter, ignorantly supposed brain, and he falls like a stot struck in the spine.—Fifthly, Simply ask him, should you meet him in the lowest society you happen to keep, what he means by being such a lying idiot — he leaves the room, and you never see or hear him more.—Sixthly, Kick him.—Seventhly, Into the Magazine with him.—Eighthly, Should he by any possibility be a gentleman, the Duello.

Shepherd. Dear me!

North. Have you seen Croly's Book on the Apocalypse, Mr Tickler?

Tickler. No.

North. It is a splendid attempt—you ought to read it, I assure you, not merely as a Treatise on a very deep subject of divinity, but as a political and historical sketch, directly applicable and intentionally applied to the present and coming time. It is a long time since I have read anything finer than his passages—On the Fall of the Roman Empire—The Constitution of the Pagan Hierarchy — The Nature of Romish Modern Idolatry — The French Revolution — The Sceptical Writers who preceded it—The Present State of Europe—and, The Character of the Chief Instruments of English Success during the War. These are all grand topics, and magnificently treated.

Tickler. He is a powerful prose-writer, Mr Croly——

Shepherd. And a poo'rfu poet too——

Tickler. And on the right side, and therefore abused by Whigs and Radicals——

North. And praised by Tories, and all good men and true.

Shepherd. Abused by Whigs and Radicals! Wha's safe frae that? "The Duke of Wellington entered his carriage amidst groans and hisses!!!"—*Morning Paper.*

North. Who groaned and hissed the conqueror of Napoleon? Hackney coachmen dismissed for drunkenness — beaten boxers become pickpockets — prostitutes — burglars returned from Botany Bay—cashiered clerks with coin chinking in their fobs, furnished by De Courcy Ireland—felons acquitted at the Old Bailey on *alibi*—shopmen out of employment, because they constantly robbed the till—waiters kicked from bar to bar for secreting silver spoons—emeriti besom-brandishers of the crossings of streets—sweeps—petitioning beggars, whose wives are all dying of cancers—mud-larks—chalkers to Dr Eady—a reporter to the "Morning Paper," and the hangman.

Shepherd. Hae dune—hae dune! You'll gar me split.

Tickler. North, why do you never review Bowring in that Magazine of yours?

North. Because I cannot lay my hands on all his various volumes—some having been lost, and some stolen—and I should wish to give a general estimate of his literary character.

Shepherd. I suspeck he's a real clever fallow, that Jock Bowrin.[1]

North. He has a wonderful gift of tongues — great powers, indeed, of acquisition, and great acquirements. He has also poetical taste, feeling, and even genius; and seems to be, on the whole, a good translator.

Shepherd. I like to hear you speak sae, sir — for, oh man! thae waefu' politics——

North. Shall never sway, have never swayed, my judgment, James, of the literary talents of any man of real merit, like Mr Bowring. His political principles and mine are wide as the Poles asunder; nor, should he ever come under my hands in that character, will I show him any mercy—although all justice. Let him do the same by me, in that able periodical the *Westminster* — to which I hear he contributes — or in any

[1] Afterwards Sir John Bowring, the friend and literary executor of Jeremy Bentham. He now holds a lucrative government office at Hong-Kong.

other place under the cope of heaven. But when I see him gathering the flowers of poetry, with equal skill and enthusiasm, from the sunny gardens of the south and the icy deserts of the north, then, James, I fling all other thoughts to the winds, and love to hail him a true son of Apollo.

Tickler. Bravo—bravo—bravissimo!

North. May I believe, sir, what I hear from so many quarters, that you are about editing the SOUTHSIDE PAPERS?

Tickler. You may. The Preface is at press.[1]

Shepherd. That's gran' news!—But, pity me, there's John Knox's moniment and the Glasgow Cathedral reappearin aboon the subsidin waves! Anither bowl, sir?

North. Not a drop. We have timed it to a minute—nine o'clock. You know we are all engaged—and we are not men to neglect an engagement.

Shepherd. Especially to sooper wi' leddies—let's aff. Oh, man! Bronte, but you have behaved weel—never opened your mouth the haill nicht—but sat listenin there to our conversation. Mony a Christian puppy micht take a lesson frae thee.

Bronte. Bow—wow—wow.

Shepherd. What spangs! [*Exeunt omnes.*

[1] These papers never made their appearance.

XVI.

(JANUARY 1828.)

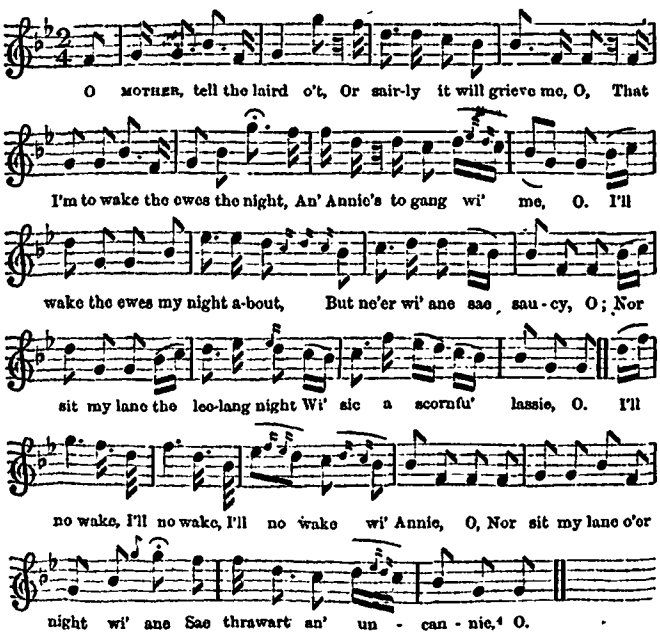
Scene I.—Picardy Place—South-east Drawing-room.

The SHEPHERD *solus.*

Shepherd. Perfeck enchantment! Ae single material coal-fire multiplied by mirrors into a score o' unsubstantial reflections, ilka image burnin awa as brichtly up its ain shadowy chimley, as the original Prototeep! Only, ye dinna hear the phantom-fires murmurin about the bars—their flickerin tongues are a' silent—they micht seem to reek at a puff o' the Prototeep,—but sic seemin wadna dim the atmosphere o' this splendid Saloon. The refraction and reflection o' light's a beautifu' mystery, and I wuss I understood the sceeance o' optics. And yet aiblins it's better no—I michtna then wi' sic a shudder o' instantawneous delicht, naething short o' religion, glower upon the rainbow, the Apparition o' the storm. Let Pheelosophers ken causes—Poets effecks. Ye canna ca' him an ignorawmus that kens effecks—and then in the moral world, which belangs to men o' genius like Me and Burns, there's for the maist part a confused but no an obscure notion o' causes accompanying the knowledge o' effecks—difficult to express formally, like a preacher in his poupit, or a professor in his chair, but colouring the poetry o' effecks wi' the tinge o' the pheelosophy o' causes, sae that the reader alloos that reason and imagination are ane, and that there's nae truth like fiction.—O, ye bit bonny bricht-burning fires, there's only ane amang ye a' that gies ony heat! A' the rest's but delusion—just as when the evening star lets loose her locks to the dews high up in heaven, every pool amang the mountains has its ain Eidolon, sae that the earth seems strewn with stars, yet a' the while there's in

reality but ae star, and her name is Venus, the delicht o' gods and men and universal natur.—Ma faith, you're a maist magnificent time-piece, towerin there on the mantel,[1] mair like a palace wi' thae ivory pillars, or the verra temple o' Solomon! To what a heicht man has carried the mechanical airts—till they've become imaginative! There's poetry in that portal—mercy on us, twa figures comin out, haun in haun, frae the interior o' the building intil the open air, apparelled like wee bit Christians, yet nae bigger than fairies. Weel, that beats a'—first the tane and then the tither, wi' its tiny siller rod, seemin to strike the chimes on a sheet o' tinsel—and then aff and awa in amang the ticks o' the clock-wark! Puir creturs, wi' a' their fantastic friskiness, they maun lead a slavish life, up and out to their wark, every hour o' the day and nicht, Sabbaths and a', sae that they haena time even to finish a dream. That's waur[2] than human life itsel; for the wee midshipman in a man-o'-war is aye allooed four hours' sleep at a streetch, and mair than that is the lot o' the puirest herd callant, wha, ha'in nae pawrents, is glad to sair[3] a hard master, withouten ony wage—a plaid, parritch,[4] and a cauff-bed.[5]—Mony, certes, is the curious contrivance for notin time! The hour-glass—to my mind the maist impressive, perhaps, o' them a'—as ye see the sand perpetually dreep-dreepin awa momently—and then a' dune just like life. Then, wi' a touch o' the haun, or whammle in which there's aye something baith o' feelin and o' thocht, there begins anither era, or epoch of an hour, during which ane o' your ain bairns, wha has been lang in a decline, and visited by the doctor only when he's been at ony rate passin by, gies a groanlike sich, and ye ken in a moment that he's dead; or an earthquake tumbles down Lisbon, or some city in Calabria, while a' the folk, men, women, and children, fall down on their knees, or are crushed aiblins by falling churches. "The dial-stane aged and green,"—ane o' Cammel's fine lines! Houses change families, not only at Michaelmas, but often, on a sudden summons frae death, there is a general flitting, awa a'thegither frae this side o' the kintra, nane o' the neebours ken whare; and sae, ye see, dial-stanes get green, for there are nae bairns' hauns to pick aff the moss, and it's no muckle that the Robin Redbreast taks for his nest,

[1] *Mantel*—chimney-piece. [2] *Waur*—worse. [3] *Sair*—serve.
[4] *Parritch*—oatmeal porridge. [5] *Cauff-bed*—chaff-bed.

or the Kitty-Wren. It's aften been a mournfu' thocht wi' me, that o' a' the dial-stanes I ever saw, stannin in a sort o' circle in the middle o' a garden, or in a nyeuck o' grun'[1] that might ance hae been a garden, just as you gang in or out o' the village, or in a kirkyard, there was aye something wrang wi' them, either wi' the finger or the face, sae that Time laughed at his ain altar, and gied it a kick in the by-gaun, till it begood to hang a' to the tae side like a negleckit tombstane ower the banes o' some ane or ither buried lang afore the Covenant.—Isna that a fiddle on the brace-piece? Let's hawnle[2] her.—Ay, just like a' the lave—ae string wantin—and something or ither wrang wi' twa-three o' the pegs—sae, that whan ye skrew up, they'll no haud[3] the grip. Neertheless, I'll play mysel a bit tune. Got, she's no an ill fiddle—but some folk can bring music out o' a boot-jack.

O MOTHER, tell the laird o't, Or sair-ly it will grieve me, O, That
I'm to wake the ewes the night, An' Annie's to gang wi' me, O. I'll
wake the ewes my night a-bout, But ne'er wi' ane sae sau-cy, O; Nor
sit my lane the lee-lang night Wi' sic a scornfu' lassie, O. I'll
no wake, I'll no wake, I'll no wake wi' Annie, O, Nor sit my lane o'er
night wi' ane Sae thrawart an' un - can - nie,[4] O.

[1] *Nyeuck o' grun'*—nook of ground. [2] *Hawnle*—handle.
[3] *Haud*—hold. [4] *Thrawart and uncannie*—perverse and dangerous.

Dear son, be wise an' warie,
But never be unmanly, O,
I've heard you tell another tale
O' young and charming Annie, O.
The ewes ye wake are fair enough,
Upon the brae sae bonny, O;
But the laird himsel wad gie them a',
To wake the night wi' Annie, O.
He'll no wake, &c.

I tauld ye ear,[1] I tauld ye late,
That lassie wad trepan ye, O,
In ilka word ye boud to say,
When left your lane wi' Annie, O.
Tak my advice this night for ance,
Or beauty's tongue will ban ye, O,
An' sey[2] your leal auld mother's skeel,[3]
Ayont the moor wi' Annie, O.
He'll no wake, &c.

The night it was a simmer night,
An' O the glen was lanely, O,
For just ae sternie's gowden ee
Peep'd o'er the hill serenely, O.
The twa are in the flow'ry heath,
Ayont the moor sae flowy, O,
An' but ae plaid atween them baith,
An' wasna that right dowy,[4] O?
He maun wake, &c.

Neist morning at his mother's knee
He bless'd her love unfeign'dly, O;
An' aye the tear fell frae his ee,
An' aye he clasp'd her kindly, O.
Of a' my griefs I've got amends,
Up in yon glen so grassy, O—
A woman only woman kens;
Your skill has won my lassie, O.
I'll aye wake, I'll aye wake,
I'll aye wake wi' Annie, O;
I'll ne'er again keep wake wi' ane
Sae sweet, sae kind, an' cannie, O.

I'm no in bad vice the nicht—and oh! but the Saloon's a gran' ha' for singin! Here's your health and sang, sir. Dog on't,

[1] *Ear*—early.
[2] *Sey*—assay, prove.
[3] *Skeel*—skill.
[4] *Dowy*—doleful; here used ironically.

if I didna believe for a minute that yon Image was anither Man! I dinna a'thegither just like this room, for it's getting unco like a Pandemonium. It would be a fearsome room to get fou in—for then you would sit glowerin in the middle o' forty fires, and yet fear that you were nae Salamander. You wud be frichtened to stir, in case you either walked intil the real ribs, or gaed crash through a lookin-glass thinkin't the trance.[1] I'm beginnin to get a wee dizzy—sae let me sit down on this settee. Oh! Wow but this is a sonsy sofa! It wad do brawly for a honeymoon. It's aneuch o' itsel to gar a man fa' in love wi' he disna ken wha—or the ugliest woman o' a' his haill acquantance. I declare that I dinna ken whether I'm sittin, or stannin, or lyin, or hangin in air, or dookin in warm water. The leanest o' humankind wud fin' itsel saft and plump, on, or rather in, sic a settee, for there's nae kennin the seat from the thing sittin, and ane's amalgamated, to use a chemical word, corporeally wi' the cushions, and part and parcel o' the fringed furniture o' a room fit to be the Sanctum Sanctorum o' the Spirit o' Sardanapalus after Apotheosis. Sae intense is the luxury, that it gars me unawaures use lang-nebbed classical words, in preference to my mither tongue, which seems ower puir-like and impovereeshed for geein adequate expression to a voluptuousness that laps my spirit in an Oriental Elysium. A doobled rose-leaf would be felt uneasily below my limbs the noo—yet I would be ower steeped in luxurious laziness to allow mysel even to be lifted up by the saft fingers, and hauns, and arms, and shouthers, o' a train o' virgins, till the loveliest o' them a' micht redd the bed, blawin awa the disturbin rose-leaf wi' her breath, and then commanding, with her dewy eyne, her nymphs to replace the Shepherd midst the down, and sing him asleep with their choral vespers. Thochts gang by the rule o' contrairies—that's certain sure—or, what could mak me think the noo o' a hard-bottomed kitchen cheyre, deep-worn, sliddery, ower wee, the crazy back bent in against the nape o' my neck, and a' the fower legs o' different staturs, ane o' the hint anes fit for a creepie, the tither a broken besom-stick, for a makshift, intil a hole far ower big; the fore anes like them o' a mawkin[2], unco short for sic lang hint anes, the tane[3] stickin out sturdily in a

[1] *Trance*—passage. [2] *Mawkin*—hare. [3] *The tane*—the one.

wrang direction, and for ever treddin on folk's taes—the tither constantly craikin frae some cause nae carpenter could ever fin' out, and if you sae muckle as mooved, disturbin the reading o' the chapter. That cheyre used aye to fa' to me, and it was so coggly that it couldna sit dooble, sae that nae lassie wud venture to drap doun aside you on't, no, not even gin you were to take her ontil your verra knee. Wha could hae foreseen, in thae days, that I, Jamie Hogg, would ever hae been sittin on down cushions, covered wi' damask, waitin for Christopher North, in Awmrose's Hotel, in Picardy, surrounded wi' mirrors a' ableeze, reflected fires, shintillating wi' gilt mouldins, and surmounted wi' eagles' beeks, seemin to haud up the glitterin glasses in the air by golden cords, while out o' the mouths o' leopards and lions depended chandeliers o' cut crystal, lustres indeed, dotted wi' wax cawnles, as the galaxy wi' stars, and filling the perfumed Saloon wi' unwinkin licht, frae the Turkey carpet to the Persian roof, a heicht that it would be fatal to fa' frae, and that a pridefu' poet couldna howp to strike wi' his head, even when loupin and dancin in an Ode and Dream. Methinks I see my father and my mother! my brothers and sisters! We are a' sittin thegither—the grown-up —the little and the less—the peat-fire, wi' an ash-root in't, is bright and vapourless as a new-risen star that ye come suddenly in sicht o', and think it sae near that you could maist grup it wi' your outstretched haun. What voices are these I hear?—the well-known, well-beloved tones of lips that have langsyne been in the clay! There is the bed on which I used to sleep beside my parents, when I was ca'd "Wee Jamie," and on the edge o' which mony a time, when I was a growin callan, hae I sat with the lassies, in innocent daffin, a skirl noo and then half waukenin the auld man asleep, or pretendin to be sae, by the ingle-neuk.[1] I see before me the coverlet patched with a million pawterns, chance being the kaleedoscope, and the harmony of the colours perfect as that o' a bank o' flowers. As for mirrors, there was but ae single lookin-glass in a' the house, geyan sair cracket, and the ising[2] rubbed aff, sae that ye had a comical face and queer, when you shaved; and on the Sunday mornin, when the family were buskin themsels for the kirk, it gaed glintin like a sunbeam

[1] *Ingle-neuk*—chimney-corner. [2] *Ising*—silvering.

frae ane till anither, but aye rested langest afore the face o' bonnie Tibby Laidlaw.

(*Enter* MR AMBROSE *with some Reindeer tongues.*)

Mr Ambrose. A present, Mr Hogg, from the Emperor of Russia to Mr North. The Emperor, you remember, sir, when Duke Nicholas,[1] used to honour Gabriel's Road.—Asleep, with his eyes open! [*Exit retrogrediens.*

Shepherd. Puir Tibby! Mony a time hae I tied my neck-cloth extendin the knot intil twa white rosebuds, in her een! stannin sae close, in order that I might see my image, that the ruffles o' my Sabbath-sark just touched her breast-knot, and my breath amaist lifted up the love-lock that the light-hearted cretur used to let hang, as if through carelessness, on ae rosy cheek, just aboon and about the rim o' her wee, white, thin lug,[2] that kent, I trow, a' the tunes ever sung in Scotland.—But—oh! that lug listened to what it shouldna hae listened till—and awa frae the Forest fled its Flower wi' an outlandish French prisoner on his parole at Selkirk, but set free by the short peace. He disappeared from her ae night in London, and she became a thing of shame, sin, and sorrow. Years afterwards she begged her way back to the hut in which she had been born—was forgiven by her father and mother, wha had never had any other child but her—and, ere the second Sabbath after her return, she was buried decently and quietly, and without many tears, in the kirkyard, where she had for many springs gathered the primroses; for, although her life had latterly been that of a great sinner, nobody that knew her attributed that sin to her, puir cretur, but thocht on her as ane o' thae victims that the Evil One is permitted, by an inscrutable Providence, to choose out frae amang the maist innocent o' the daughters o' men, to confound all that would put their trust in human virtue.—Was Awmrose no in the room the noo? Preserve us! what a tot o' tongues! And it's me that used to fin' faut wi' Shakespeare for putting lang soliloquies into the mouths of his chief characters? Now, this seems to be the pheelosophy o' the soliloquy:—either you are in the habit o' speaking to yoursel in real life or no—if you are, then it follows o' coorse, that you ought to lose no opportunity, if puttin intil a Play, o' communicatin your sentiments or opinions to yoursel in private, when there is none

[1] The late Emperor of Russia visited Edinburgh in 1816. [2] *Lug*—ear.

by to break the thread o' your discourse. If you are not, then you must never be left by yoursel in a scene; for nae actor, when he is *manet solus*, is allowed, by the laws o' the Drama, to say nor do naething—but just to walk about, or to sit down on a cheyre in the middle o' the room, whirling his hat or counting his fingers. To soliloquise seems natural to a hantle[1] o' folk—and that's reason aneuch to authoreeze the practice on the stage. Neither am I sure that soliloquies are aye short or shortish—for I ance keepit speakin to mysel, I recolleck, a' the way frae the Grey Mare's Tail[2] to Mount Benger. The fack is, that the Sowl, when up wi' ony strong passion, expresses a' it feels chiefly to itsel, even when it seems to be addressin ithers that happen to be present at the hour o' trouble. The sumphs think it's pourin itsel out to them, for the sake o' their sympathies, whereas it's in a manner beside itsel; and the tane talks till the tither, as if there were twa; but there's only ane—speaker and hearer being the same Sowl—and the triflin creturs that are in the room at the time, being little mair than sae mony chairs—the tongs or the poker—or him that they ca' the Speaker o' the Hoose o' Commons. But I'm gettin as hoarse as a craw—and had better ring the bell for a jug. Deevil tak the worsted bell-rape—see if it hasna bracken short aff, leaving the ring in my haun! Mercy on us, whatten a feet o' flunkeys in the trance!

(*Door flies open—and enter* TICKLER—NORTH, *supported by* MR AMBROSE.)

Shepherd. What a queer couple o' auld fallows, a' covered wi' cranreuch![3] Is't snawin, sirs?

Tickler. Snowing, my dear James!—Sleeting, hailing, raining, driving, and blasting, all in one unexpected coalition of parties, to the utter discomfort and dismay of all his Majesty's loyal subjects.

Shepherd. And hae you walked up, like twa fules, frae Bawhannan Lodge, in sic an eerie nicht, knee-deep in mire, glaur, and sludge?

Tickler. One of North's coach-horses is sick, and the other lame—and——

Shepherd. Catch me keepin a cotch. It costs Mr North five

[1] *Hantle*—number, handful.
[2] A waterfall near St Mary's Loch in the north of Dumfriesshire.
[3] *Cranreuch*—hoar-frost.

guineas every hurl—and him that's getting sae narrow, too—but Pride! hech, sirs, Pride gets the maister o' Avarice—and he'll no condescend to hire a haickney. Dinna melt in the Saloon, sirs—Gang intil the trance, and cast your outer skins, and then come back glitterin like twa serpents as you are, twa Boa-Constrictors, or rather Rattlesnakes, wi' your forked tongues, and wee red piercin een, growin aye mair and mair venomous, as ye begin to bask and beek in the hearth-heat, and turn about the heads o' you to spy whom you may fasten on, lick a' ower wi' glue, and then draw them into your jaws by suction, crashin their banes like egg-shells, and then hiss-hissin to ane anither in weel-pleased fierceness, after your ain natur, which mony a puir tortirt cretur has kent to his cost to be without pity and without ruth—ye Sons o' Satan!

North. Thank ye, my dear James, for all your kind inquiries. —Quite well, except being even deafer than usual, or——

Shepherd. Ne'er mind, sir; I'll mak you hear on the deafest side o' your head. But whare's the siller ear-trumpet?

Tickler. Buchanan Lodge, James, was stealthily entered a few nights ago by some rejected contributors, in a mere *jeu d'esprit*,—and a Shabby-genteel was observed by one of the police, this very afternoon, driving South in what appeared to be a hired gig, and attempting to make North's ear-trumpet perform the part of a bugle. He immediately gave chase, and has, doubtless, overtaken the depredator at Fushie Bridge or Torsonce.

Shepherd. The neist article my gentleman sends maun be on the Tread Mill. But what's North fummlin at yonner? Odd, he's just, for a' the warld, like a wee bit corn-stack, frosted and pouthered ower wi' rime. Noo Mr Awmrose has gotten him out o' the theekin,—and oh! but he looks genteel, and like a verra nobleman, in that speck-and-span-new blue coat, wi' big yellow buttons; nor wad that breast ill become a star. Reel roun' his throne, Mr Awmrose.

[Mr Ambrose *wheels* Mr North *in the Patent Chair to the off-door side of the Fire, setting his Footstool, and depositing the Crutch in its own niche, leaning on the pedestal of Apollo.*

Tickler. Heaven and earth! James, are you well, my dear friend?—you seem reduced to a mere shadow.

Shepherd. Reduced to a mere shadow!—I'm thinkin, sir, you'll hae been mistakin your nain figure in the glass for me the noo——

North. Thank ye, Mr Ambrose.—Family all well? That's right—that's right. Where's the Shepherd? Lord bless me, James, are you ill?

Shepherd. Me ill? What the deevil's to mak me ill?—But you're baith jokin, noo, sirs.

Tickler. Pardon my weakness, James, but I had a very ugly dream about you—and your appearance.

Shepherd. Ma appearance? What the deevil's the matter wi' ma appearance? Mr North, am I luckin ony way out o' health?—(*Aside*)—Ay, ay, my lads, I see what you're ettlin at noo—but I'm no sae saft and simple's I look like.—(*Aloud*)—You had an ugly dream, Mr Tickler?—what was't about? Let's hear't.

Tickler. That you were dead, James,—laid out—coffined—biered—buried—superscribed—and——

Shepherd. Houkit[1] up by half-a-dizzen resurrection-men—driven by nicht in a gig to Embro', and selt for three pounds ten shillings to a lecturin surgeon, for a subject o' demonstration afore a schule o' young doctors; and after that, an atomy in Surgeons' Ha'. Do ye ken, Mr Tickler, that I wud like gran' to see you disseckit. That is, after you was dead—for I'm no wishin you dead yet, although you plague me sairly sometimes; and are aye tryin, I winna say wi' what success, to be witty at my expense. I wish you a' happiness, sir, and a lang life—but I howp I may add without offence, that gin ye was fairly and *bonny feedy* dead—I wud like to see the corp disseckit, no on a public table, afore hunners o' glowering gawpuses, but in a parlour afore a few chosen peers, sic as Mr North there, and ODoherty; and Δ,[2] who, by the way, would be happy, I dinna doubt, to perform the operation himsel, and I could answer for his doin't wi' a haun at ance firm and tender, resolute and respeckfu', for ae man o' genius is aye kind to anither on a' sic occasions; and Δ would cut you up, sir, as delicately as you were his ain faither.

[1] *Houkit*—dug.

[2] D. M. Moir, the Delta of *Blackwood's Magazine*, was an eminent medical practitioner at Musselburgh, near Edinburgh. He died in 1851.

Tickler. Is it to give a flavour to the oysters, James, that you talk so? Suppose we change the subject.

Shepherd. We shall leave that to Δ, sir. There's nae need for changin the subject yet; besides, didna ye introduce't yoursel, by offerin to receet your ugly dream about my decease? But——

North. My dear James, I have left you, by my last will and testament, my Skull.

Shepherd. Oh! my dear sir, but I take that verra verra kind. I'll hae't siller-munted,—the tap o't—that is, the organ o' veneration, which in you is enormous—sawn aff like that o' a cocko-nit, and then fastened on for a lid by a hinge,—and I'll keep a' ma manuscripps in't—and also that wee stereoteep Bible you gied me that beautiful Sunday simmer night we spak sae seriously about religion, when the sun was settin sae gloriously, and the profound hush o' nature seemed o' itsel an assurance o' immortality. Mr Tickler, will ye no leave me your skull, too, as weel's the cremona that I ken's in a codicil, to staun cheek-by-jowl wi' Mr North's, on the tap o' my mahogany leebrary?

Tickler. Be it so, James—but the bequest must be mutual.

Shepherd. I hae nae objections—there's my thumb I'll no'er beguile you. Oh, sir! but I wad look unco gash[1] on a bit pedestal in the parlour o' Southside, when you were enterteenin your sma' snug pairties wi' anecdots o' the Shepherd. There's something pleasant in the thocht, sir, for I'm sure ye wad tell nae ill o' me—and that you wud every Saturday nicht wipe the dust frae my skull wi' a towel, mutterin perhaps at a time, "Alas, poor Yorick!"

Tickler. James, you affect me—you do indeed——

Shepherd. Silly fules, noo, were they to owerhear us jockin and jeerin in this gate about ane anither's skulls, wud ca' us Atheists, and deny our richt to Christian burial. But what signifies a skull? The shell of the flown bird, said Simonides, a pensive poet of old—for whose sake would that I could read Greek—though I fancy there are o' him but some sma' and uncertain remains.

North. Religion, James, follows the bird in her flight, and beholds her alight in heaven.

Shepherd. Yet that's nae reason for treatin a skull irreve-

[1] *Unco gash*—uncommonly sagacious.

rently—playin tricks wi't—pittin a cigaur in its teeth—or a wig on't—or tryin to stick spectacles afore the howes[1] o' what was ance its een—without ony brig o' a nose for them to rest on—or whisperin intil its wide-open but deaf, deaf lugs, some amusin maitter frae ane o' the Noctes Ambrosianæ! There's nae reason for haudin up a caulker o' Glenlivet to its gab, and askin the silent skull for a sentiment—or to join, as it used to do, till its very sutures were like to split, in a Three times Three! There's nae reason for ca'in upon't for a sang, true as its ear ance was, and its tongue like silver—for a sang either tragic or comic—ony mair than there is for playin at bowls wi't on the green, or at fit-ba'—or geein it even to the bairns, if they hae courage to accepp o't, instead o' a turnip, to frighten folk wi' a cawnle low within its banes by the side o' a kirkyard wa' on Halloween. In short, there's nae need either for despair or daffin, when a man takes the skull o' a freen into his haun, or looks at it on the mantel-piece. It's a *mementy mori* o' friendship—and at a' yevents, isna't far better, think ye, sirs, for a skull to be stannin decently as a relic or bequest, in a warm cozy parlour like that at Mount Benger, Southside, or Bawhannan Lodge, than deep down within the clayey cauldness—the rotten corruption o' a great city kirkyard, o' which the haill sile[2] is a decomposition o' flesh and banes, as if ae vast corp filled a' the burial-grund—and ye canna stick in a pick without hittin the splinter o' the coffin?

North. James, many a merry Christmas to us all. What a jug!

Shepherd. It's an instinck wi' me noo, makin het whisky toddy. A' the time o' our silly discourse about our skulls, was I steerin about the liquid, plumpin in the bits o' sugar, and garrin the green bottle gurgle—unconscious o' what I was about—yet, as ye observe, sir, wi' your usual sagacity, "What a jug!"

Tickler. There is no such school of temperance as Ambrose's in the world—a skreed[3] in any room of his house clears my head for a month, and re-strings my stomach to such a pitch of power, that, like an ostrich, I can digest a nail or a cork-screw.

[1] *Howes*—holes. [2] *Sile*—soil.
[3] *A skreed*—a liberal allowance of anything.

North. Sobriety is the strength of our physical, moral, and intellectual life. But how can any man hope to continue long sober, who calumniates cordial conviviality—misnames fun folly, and mirth malignity — turns up the whites of his eyes at humour, because it is broad, broad as the sea in sunshine —who in his false wisdom knows not what real wit is, or, half knowing it, turns away, abashed and detected, from its corruscations, that are ever harmless to the truly good, and wither only the weak or the wicked—who——

Shepherd. Stap, sir — stap — for you'll never be able to fin' your way, at this time o' nicht, out o' sic a sentence. It's o' a perplexin and bewilderin kind o' construction, and I'll defy mortal man to make his escape out o't without breakin through, in perfect desperation, a' the rules o' grammar, and upsettin Dr Syntax at the door o' a parenthesis.

North. Never shall Sot be suffered to sit at our Symposium, James. Not even the genius of a Sheridan——

Shepherd. Pshewwhoohoo—the genius o' Sheridan! Oh, sir, but his comedies are cauldrife compositions; and the haill tot of them's no worth the warst Noctes Ambrosianæ that ever Maister Gurney, that gentleman o' the press, extended frae out o' short haun. His mind had baith pint and glitter —but sae has a preen. Sheridan had but a sma' sowl—and even his oratory was feeble, false, and fushionless; and ane o' the auld Covenanters wad hae rowted him doun intil a silent ceepher on the hill-side, makin him fin' what eloquence is, no made up o' patches frae ither men's pamphlets, and o' lang accounts and statements, interlarded wi' rancid rant, and faded figures new dyed like auld claes, that do weel aneuch by cawnle-light, but look desperate shabby in the daytime—wi' remarks, forsooth, on human life and the principles of Eternal Justice — nae less — o' which the unhappy neerdoweel kent muckle, nae doubt—having never read a good and great book a' his days, and associated chiefly with the vilest o' the vile——

North. James—What's the meaning of all this? These sudden bursts——

Shepherd. I canna thole to hear sic a sot as Sherry aye classed wi' Pitt and Burke.

Tickler. Nor I. A couple of clever comedies—a few elegant epilogues—a so-so opera—some spirited speechifyings—a few

fitful flashes—some composed corruscations of conversational wit—will these make a great man? Bah! As to his faults and failings, on their ashes we must tread tenderly——

North. Yes; but we must not collect them in an urn, and weep over them in maudlin worship. He was but a town-wit after all, and of a very superficial fancy. He had no imagination.

Shepherd. No a grain. He could say sharp things upon blunt people — turn a common thocht wi' a certain neatness, that gied it, at first hearin, an air o' novelty; and an image bein' to him rather a rare occurrence, he polished it aff till the pebble seemed a diamond; but after a' it couldna write on glass, and was barely worth settin in the warst goold. He wanted copiousness, ferteelity, richness, vareeity, feelin, truth o' natur, sudden inspiration, poo'r[1] o' thocht; and as for either beauty or sublimity, he had a fause notion o' them in words, and nae notion o' them at a' in things, and never drew a tear or garred the reader grue[2] in a' his days. Peezarro alone pruves him to hae had nae real sowl; for though the subject be patriotism, and liberty, and independence, it's a' naething but flummery, and a fritter o' gran' soundin senseless words, that gang in at the tae lug and out at the tither, like great big bummin blue-bottle flees on a sunny day, in a room wi' cross lichts—the folk at their toddy half-wonderin and half-angry wi' the pompous insecks. Better far the bonny, licht, spatty, and mealy-winged, aerial butterflee, that keeps waverin frae flower to firmament, useless but beautifu', and remembered, for sake o' its silent mirth and motion, after the bit gaudy ephemeral has sank down and expired amidst the evening dews. And oh, how many thousand times mair preferable, the bit broon busy bee, that has a sting, but gin ye let it alane will sting naebody—that selects, by instinct, aye the sweetest flowers, rare as they may be in the weedy wild, and wi' cheerfu' murmur returns wax or honey laden, at the gloamin, to its straw-thecked skep in the garden-nyeuck, and continues, wi' the rest o' its innocent and industrious nation, to sing a' nicht lang, when a' the een o' heaven hae closed, and no a breath is stirrin outower a' the hills, trees, or castles.

Tickler. Would you believe it, Hogg, that it is no unusual

[1] *Poo'r*—power. [2] *Grue*—shudder.

thing for droves of numbskulls to come driving along these lobbies, poking their low-browed stupidities into every parlour, hoping to surprise us at a Noctes Ambrosianæ, and wondering what can possibly have become of us, with their great big grey goggle eyes, sticking boiled-lobster-like out of their dirty-red physiognomies, with their clumsy gift of tongues lolling out of their blubber-lipped mouths, in a sort of speechless slaver, their very nostrils distended and quivering with vulgar perplexity and disappointment, and an ear seemingly nailed to each side of their ignorance-box, somewhere about the size of a small kibbock?[1]

Shepherd. Whatten a fricht they wud get gin they were to find us! The sumphs wud swarf.[2]

North. They know not, James, that a single tap of the crutch on the floor enchants us and our orgies into instant invisibility. Hunt the dewdrops after they have fled from before the sun-rising—the clouds that have gone sailing away over the western horizon, to be in at the sun-setting—the flashing and foaming waves that have left the sea and all her isles in a calm at last—the cushats still murmuring on farther and farther into the far forest, till the sound is now faint as an echo, and then nothing—golden eagles lost in light, and raging in their joy on the very rim of this globe's attraction—during the summer heats, the wild-flowers that strew the old woods of Caledon only during the pure snowy breath of the earth-brightening spring — the stars, that at once disappear with all their thousands, at the howl of the midnight storm—the lightnings suddenly intersecting the collied night, and then off and away for ever, quicker than forgotten thoughts—the grave-mounds, once so round and green, James, and stepped over so tenderly by footsteps going towards the low door of the little kirk, but all gone now, James, — kirk, kirk-yard and all, James—and not a house in all the whole parish that has not been many times over and over again pulled down—altered—rebuilt, till a ghost, could he but loosen himself from the strong till, and raise up his head from among a twenty-acre field of turnips, and potatoes, and pease, would know not his own bonny birth-place, and death-place too, once so fringed and fragrant with brushwood over all its knolls, with whins, and broom, and harebells, and in moist moorland

[1] *Kibbock*—a cheese. [2] *Swarf*—swoon.

places, James, beautiful with "green grows the rashes o'," and a little loch, clear as any well, and always, always when you lay down and drank, cool, cold, chill, and soul-restoring—now drained for the sake of marl, and forsaken by the wild swans, that used to descend from heaven in their perfect whiteness, for a moment fold up their sounding pinions, and then, hoisting their wings for sails, go veering like ships on a pleasure-cruise, all up and down in every direction, obeying the air-like impulses of inward happiness, all up and down, James, such heavenly air-and-water-woven world as your own St Mary's Loch, or Loch of the Lowes, with its old, silent, ruined chapel, and one or two shepherds' houses, as silent as the chapel, but, as you may know from the smoke, old, but not ruined, and, though silent, alive!

Tickler. Hurra! hurra! hurra!

Shepherd. Oh, man, North, but you're a bare-faced eemetawtor o' me! You never wad hae spoken in that gate, a' your days, had you never kent me, and hearkened till me, when Nature lets me lowse, like a water that has been gettin itsel fed a' nicht, far aff at its source amang the muntains, and that a' at ance, when bits o' callants and lassies are plouterin about fishin for mennons wi' thread and cruckit preens, comes doun, red and roarin, in spate, and gin the bairns hadna heard the weel-kenn'd thunner, up aboon the linn, as it approached, wad hae sweepit them in twa-three hours frae Mingan[1] to the Main,—na, broken at ae charge a' the squadrons o' cavalry that ever nichered, frae queerassears to Cossacks, and made parks o' artillery play spin like sae mony straes! Then how the earth-bound roots o' the auld forest-trees rejoice, as oak, ash, and elm try in vain to behold their shadows in the turbid flood! The holms and meadows are all overflowed into a hundred isles—and the kirk is cut aff frae the mainlaun'! How, think ye, will the people get to the summer sacrament the morn? By the morn, a' will be so quate that you will hear the lark at his greatest heicht in heaven, and the bit gowan you canna help treddin on, crunklin aneath your feet—the earth below will be greener than the heavens aboon are blue—a' the waters will be transparent as windows in shadow, or glitterin like windows when the sun glints on the panes,—and parties o' well-dressed people a'

[1] A farm on the upper part of the Tweed.

proceedin sae orderly thegither, or here and there comin down hill-sides, and out o' the mooths o' wee bit glens, anes, and twas, and threes—say a man and his wife and bairn, or a lassie and her sweetheart, or an auld body wi' fourscore on his back, but hale and hearty for a' that, comin to worship by himsel, for his wife and family hae been lang dead, frae the farthest aff and maist lanesome house in a' a gey wild hill-parish, every Sabbath-day, as regular as the shadow fa's on the dial, and the kirk-bell is rung by drucken Davy, wha's fou a' the week thro', but nane but a leear will say that they ever saw him the waur o' drink on the Lord's day, and that's something—though but ane in seven.

Tickler. Hurra! hurra! hurra!

North. Oh, man, Hogg, but you are a bare-faced "eemetawtor" of me.

Shepherd. That's the way o't. That's the way that folks is rubbit[1] o' their oreeginality. What's a Noctes withouten the Shepherd? Tell me that.—But you're welcome, sir, to be a copiawtor at times, for there's nae denyin that when you either skaitch or feenish aff, after your ain manner, there's few hauns like Christopher North, either ancient or modern. But excuse me, sir, for sayin, that, about the tenth tummler or sae, oh, sir, you are tiresome, tiresome——

North. A gross contradiction, James, of that compliment you paid me half-an-hour ago.

Tickler. Claw me, and I'll claw you. Eh, Jamie—Eh, Kit?

Shepherd. He that disna like flattery, is either less or mair nor man. It's the natural language o' freenship, and as distinck frae flummery as a bee frae a drone, a swan frae a guse, a bit bonny yellow meadow-born spanging froggy frae an ugly carbunkle-backit, din,[2] nettle-crawlin taid—a real lake frae meerage. What the deevil's the use or meanin o' a freen[3] that aye looks dour at you whan you're speakin at your verra best, and gies his nose a snifter, and his breast a grumph, whan you're dune singin, and a' hauns but his clappin, a' tongues but his roosin your voice to the skies,—his hauns rooted intil the pocket o' his breeks—a hatefu' attitude,—and his tongue seen through his chafts, as if he

[1] *Rubbit*—robbed. [2] *Din*—dun. [3] *Freen*—friend.

were mockin, a insult for which a chiel that's a Christian ought to be hanged,—drawn and quartered,—disseckit,—and hung in chains. Commend me to freens that flatter you, as it is ca'd, afore your face, and defend ye ahint your back, and review your books in Maga wi' a fine natural, nice, philosophical discrimination o' poetry—a deadly draucht to the dunces—and that, whan you are dead at last, sclock frae the Scriptures a solemn verse for your yepitaph, composed on some mild, mournfu', and melancholy nicht, when memory grows wondrous bricht aneath the moon and stars, an elegy or hymn on your genius, and on what's better than, and o' mair avail than, your genius,—your virtue, or I wad raither say your religion,—and wha wad think naething o' pu'in the nose or kickin the houghs o' the fallow that wad daur but to utter ae single syllable against you, when out o' sicht a'thegither and for ever, and just the same, but for your writings, to the warld still whurlin roun' and roun' on its axis, as if you had never been born!

North. Yes,—James,—people are proud of being praised in Maga—for they know that I would scorn to prostitute praise to Prince, Kaesar, or King.

Shepherd. Brawly[1] do they ken that, sir,—and the consequence is, that ye have only to look intil an author's face to ken whether he's been praised or no in *Blackwood.* If never mentioned at a', he pits on a queer kind o' creeticeesin and dissatisfied face at naming o' The Periodical, but's feared to say onything against it, in case Mr North comes to hear o't, for hope's no yet quite dead within him, and he still keeps applyin at headquarters, through the awgency o' freens, for a notice in the Noctes;—if roosed to the skies, he hauds up his head like an exultin heir o' immortality, tryin a' the time no to be ower proud, and sayin ceevil things to the silly—praisin ither folk's warks—being far removed aboon envy or jealousy noo—and on an equality wi' a' writers, leevin or dead, but Sir Walter—geein capital denners,—sittin in a front seat o' a box in the playhouse—amaist howpin that the pit will applaud him wi' a ruff—aftener than afore, and mair conspicuous even, in his pew—on Princes Street, enveloped in a new London greatcoat lined wi' silk,—and kissin his hand to person-

[1] *Brawly*—finely.

ages in chariots, who occasionally return the salute as if they had never seen him atween the een afore;—but oh! sir,—ask me not to pent the face o' him that has been damned!

Tickler. Wheesht—James—wheesht.

Shepherd. Yes—I will wheesh—for it's "a face to dream o'," as that rare genius Coleridge says, "no to see,"—and I'm sure, Mr North, gin you were to come on't suddenly, at the corner o' Picardy, you wad loup out o' your seven senses.

North. It is so long since I have damned an author, that the gentleman you allude to, James, must be well stricken in years.

Shepherd. He's no mair than forty—to ma certain knowledge—and though he never, to be sure, had muckle meanin in the face o' him, yet was he a stout able-bodied man, and ance walked sax miles in an hour, tae and heel. Noo he seems several centuries auld—just like a tree that has been left stannin after bein' barked, and although a' covered, yards up frae the grun', wi' nasty funguses, and sae sliddery-lookin in its whiteness, that you see at ance nae sailor cud speel't, yet has here and there bits o' twigs that seem to contain life in them, but no life aneuch to put forth leaves, only bits o' scraggy, fushionless, bluidless buds, like shrivelled haws, or moles,—that is, deevil-marks,—on the arms and shouthers o' an auld witch. Good safe us! Mr North, if he was to come in the noo!

North. Catch him coming within compass of my crutch, James. Instinct with him now does the work of reason.

Tickler. I scarcely think, James, that you are in your usual spirits to-night. Come, be brilliant.

Shepherd. Oh, man, Mr Tickler, wha wad hae expeckit sic a sumphish speech frae you, sir? Wha was ever brilliant at a biddin? Bid a sleepin fire bleeze—Wull't? Na. But ripe the ribs, and then gie the central coal a smash wi' the poker, and lo! a volcano vomits like Etna or Vesuvius.

Tickler. After all, my dear James, I believe the truth to be, that Christmas is not a merry season.

Shepherd. Aiblins scaircely sae to men like us, that's gettin raither auld. But though no merry, it needna be melancholy—for after a', death, that taks awa the gude—a freen or twa drappin awa ilka year—is no so very terrible, except when he comes to our ain fireside, our ain bed, or our ain cradle—and,

for my ain part, I can drink, wi' an unpainfu' tear, or without ony tear at a', to the memory o' them I loved dearly, naething doubtin that Heaven is the trystin-place where all friends and lovers will feenally meet at last, free frae a' jealousies and heartburnings, and sorrows, and angers—sae, why should our Christmas be melancholy, though we three have buried some that last year lauched, and sang, and danced in our presence, and because of our presence, and looked as if they had been destined for a lang lang life?

North. What mortality among the English Bishops, James, this year!

Shepherd. An English Bishop maun hate to dee, proud as he is o' himsel, and his Cathedral, wi' his pouthered weeg, his balloon sleeves, his silk petticoats, and his fearsome income—a domestic chaplain, wha's only a better sort o' flunkey, aye booin and booin at every word the Spiritual Lord says, and——

North. James!—I am delighted, Tickler, to see Copplestone a Bishop;[1] not an abler, better man in England. Talent and integrity are, nowadays, sure to make their way to the Bench; and it is thus that the church establishment of England will stand like a rock.

Tickler. The *Edinburgh Review* entertains singular opinions on Copplestone. One number he is a barn-door fowl, another a finished scholar; now a retromingent animal; then a first-rate theologian, metaphysician, and political economist—he soon afterwards degenerates into a third-rate man, and finally into an old woman, afraid of Catholic emancipation, and preaching prosy sermons, smelling of orthodoxy and dotage. —What do the blockheads mean, North?

Shepherd. Sumphs, sumphs indeed. But do you ken, in spite o' a' that, I'm just desperate fond o' Christmas minshed pies. Sirs—in a bonny bleeze o' brandy, burnin blue as snapdragon—I can devoor a dizzen.

Tickler. Christmas geese are prime birds, James, with onions and sage sufficient, and each mouthful accompanied by its contingent of rich red apple-sauce.

Shepherd. A guse aye gies me the colic—yet I canna help eatin't for a' that—for whan there's nae sin nor iniquity,

[1] Dr Edward Copplestone, elected Provost of Oriel College, Oxford, in 1814, was promoted to the bishopric of Llandaff in 1828. He died in 1849.

it's richt and reasonable to purchase pleasure at the expense o' pain. I like to eat a' sorts o' land or fresh-water wild-fools—and eke the eggs. Pease-weeps'[1] eggs is capital poached.

Tickler. James, whether do you like eating or drinking best? Is hunger or thirst the preferable appetite?

Shepherd. Why, you see, I, for ane, never eat but when I'm hungry—and hunger's soon satisfied if you hae plenty o' vittals. Compare that wi' drinkin when you're thursty—either clear well-water, or sour-milk, or sma' yill, or porter, or speerits half-and-half, and then I wad say that eatin and drinkin's pretty much of a muchness—very nearly on a par, wi' this difference, that hunger wi' me's never sae intense as thurst. I never was sae hungry that I wad hae devoured a bane frae the gutter, but I hae often been sae thursty, on the muirs, that I hae drank black moss-water wi' a green scum on't without scunnerin.

North. I never was hungry in my life.

Shepherd. That's a confounded lee, sir, beggin your pardon——

North. No offence, James—but the instant I begin to eat, my appetite is felt to be excellent.

Shepherd. Felt and seen baith, sir. A how-towdie's a mere laverock to you, sir, on the day the Magazine's finished aff—and Mr Awmrose himsel canna help lauching at the relays o' het beef-stakes that ye keep yokin to, wi' pickled ingans or shallotts, and spoonfu's o' Dickson's mustard, that wad be aneuch to blin' a Lynx.

Tickler. I have lost my appetite——

Shepherd. I howp nae puir man 'ill find it, now that wages is low and wark scarce;—but drinkin, you see, Mr North, has this great advantage over eatin, that ye may drink a' nicht lang without being thursty—tummler after tummler—jug after jug—bowl after bowl—as lang's you're no sick—and you're better worth sittin wi' at ten than at aucht, and at twal than at ten, and during the sma' hours you're just intolerable good company—scarcely bearable at a', ane waxes sae truly wutty and out o' a' measure deevertin; whereas, I'll defy ony man, the best natural and acquired glutton that ever was born and bred at the feet o' a father that gaed aff at a city feast, wi' a gob o' green fat o' turtle half-way down

[1] *Pease-weep*—lapwing.

his gullet, in an apoplexy, to carry on the eatin wi' ony spunk, or speerit after three or four courses, forbye toasted cheese, and roasted chesnuts, and a dessert o' filberts, prunes, awmons, and raisins, ginger-frute, guava jeely, and ither Wast Indian preserves. The cretur coups ower[1] comatose. But only tak tent[2] no to roar ower loud and lang in speakin or singin, and you may drink awa at the Glenlivet till past midnight, and weel on to the morning o' the day after to-morrow.

Tickler. Next to the British, Hogg, I know no such constitution as yours—so fine a balance of powers. I daresay, you never had an hour's serious illness in your life.

Shepherd. That's a' you ken—and the observe comes weel frae you that began the nicht wi' geein the club my death-like prognosis.

Tickler. Prognosis?

Shepherd. Simtoms like. This back-end[3] I had, a' three at ance, the Tick Dollaroose, the Angeena Pectoris, and the Jaundice.

North. James—James—James!

Tickler. Hogg—Hogg—Hogg!

Shepherd. I never fan' ony pain like the Tick Dollaroose. Ane's no accustomed to a pain in the face. For the toothache's in the inside o' the mouth, no in the face; and you've nae idea hoo sensitive's the face. Cheeks are a' fu' o' nerves—and the Tick attacks the haill bunch o' them, screwing them up to sic a pitch o' tension that you canna help screechin out, like a thousan' ools, and clappin the pawms o' your hauns to your distrackit chafts, and rowin yoursel on the floor, on your groof,[4] wi' your hair on end, and your een on fire, and a general muscular convulsion in a' your sinnies, sae piercin, and searchin, and scrutinisin, and diggin, and houkin, and tearin is the pangfu' pain that keeps eatin awa and manglin the nerves o' your human face divine. Draps o' sweat, as big as beads for the neck or arms o' a lassie, are pourin doun to the verra floor, so that the folk that hears you roarin thinks you're greetin, and you're aye afterwards considered a bairnly chiel through the haill kintra. In ane o' the sudden fits I gruppit sic haud o' a grape that I was helpin our Shusey[5] to muck the byre wi', that it withered in my fingers like a frush[6]

[1] *Coups ower*—tumbles over.
[2] *Tak tent*—take care.
[3] *Back-end*—close of the year.
[4] *Groof*—belly.
[5] *Shusey*—Susan.
[6] *Frush*—brittle.

saugh-wand[1]—and 'twould hae been the same, had it been a bar o' airn. Only think o' the Tick Dollaroose in a man's face continuing to a' eternity.

North. Or even for a few million ages——

Shepherd. Angeena Pectoris is even waur, if waur may be, than the Tick Dollaroose. Some say it's an ossified condition o' the coronary arteries o' the heart; but that's no necessarily true—for there's nae ossification o' these arterial branches o' my heart. But oh! sirs, the fit's deadly, and maist like till death. A' at ance, especially if you be walkin up-hill, it comes on you like the shadow o' a thunder-cloud ower smilin natur, silencin a' the singin birds, as if it threatened earthquake,—and you canna doubt that your last hour is come, and that your sowl is about to be demanded of you by its Maker. However often you may have it, you aye feel and believe that it is, this time—death. It is a sort o' swoon, without loss o' sense—a dwawm, in which there still is consciousness—a stoppage o' a' the animal functions, even o' breathin itsel; which, if I'm no mista'en, is the meanin o' a syncope—and a' the while something is rug-ruggin[2] at the heart itsel, something cauld and ponderous, amaist like the forefinger and thoom o' a heavy haun—the haun o' an evil speerit; and then you expeck that your heart is to rin doun, just like a clock, wi' a dull cloggy noise, or rumble like that o' disarranged machinery, and then to beat, to tick nae mair! The collapse is dreadfu'. Ay, Mr North, collapse is the word.

North. Consult Uwins on Indigestion, James—the best medical work I have read for years, of a popular, yet scientific character.

Shepherd. Noo for the Jaundice. The Angeena Pectoris, the Tic Dollaroose, are intermittent—"like angel visits, few and far between"—but the jaundice lasts for weeks, when it is gatherin or brewin in the system—for weeks at its yellowest heicht,—and for weeks as the disease is ebbin in the blood—a disease, if I'm no sair mista'en, o' the liver.

North. An obstructed condition of the duodenum, James——

Shepherd. The mental depression o' the sowl in the jaundice is most truly dreadfu'. It would hae sunk Samson on the morning o' the day that he bore aff on his back the gates o' Gaza.

[1] *Saugh-wand*—willow-wand.

[2] *Rug-ruggin*—tear-tearing.

Tickler. Tell us all about it, James.

Shepherd. You begin to hate and be sick o' things that used to be maist delightfu'—sic as the sky, and streams, and hills, and the ee and voice, and haun and breast o' woman. You dauner about the doors, dour and dowie, and are seen sittin in nyeuks and corners, whare there's little licht, no mindin the cobwabs, or the spiders themselves drappin doun amang your unkempt hair. You hae nae appeteet; and if by ony chance you think you could tak a mouthfu' o' a particular dish, you splutter't out again, as if it were bitter ashes. You canna say that you are unco ill either, but just a wee sickish—tongue furry as if you had been licking a muff or a mawkin—and you observe, frae folk stannin weel back when you happen to speak to them—which is no aften—that your breath's bad, though a week before it was as caller as clover. You snore mair than you sleep—and dream wi' your een open—ugly, confused, mean, stupid, unimaginative dreams, like those of a drunk dunce imitatin a Noctes—and that's aboot the warst thing o' a' the complaint, that you're ashamed o' yoursel, and begin to fear that you're no the man you ance thocht yoursel, when in health shootin groose on the hills, or listerin sawmon.

North. The jaundice that, James, of a man of genius—of the author of the *Queen's Wake.*

Shepherd. Wad ye believe it, sir, that I was ashamed of "Kilmeny?" A' the poems I ever writ seemed trash—rubbish—fuilzie; and as for my prose—even my verra articles in Maga—"Shepherd's Calendar" and a'—waxed havers—like something in the *Metropolitan Quarterly Magazine*, the stupidest o' a' created periodicals, and now deader than a' the nails in Nebuchadnezzar's coffin.

North. The disease must have been at its climax then, my dear James.

Shepherd. Na, na, na; it was far frae the cleemax. I tuk to the bed, and never luckit out frae the coortains for a fortnight—gettin glummier and glummier in sense and sowl, heart, mind, body, and estate—eating little or naething, and—wad ye believe it?—sick, and like to scunner at the very name o' whusky.

North. Thank God, I knew nothing of all this, James. I could not have borne the thought, much less the sight, of such total prostration, or rather perversion of your understanding.

Shepherd. Wearied and worn out wi' lyin in the bed, I got up wi' some sma' assistance frae wee Jamie, God bless him! and telt them to open the shutters. What a sicht! A' faces as yellow 's yellow lilies, like the parchment o' an auld drum-head! Ghastly were they, ane and a', whan they leuch;[1] yet seemed insensible o' their corp-like hue—I mean, a corp that has died o' some unnatural disease, and been keepit ower lang aboon grun' in close weather, the carpenter having gotten drunk, and botched the coffin. I ca'd for the glass—and my ain face was the warst o' the haill set. Whites o' een! They were the colour o' dandelions, or yellow-yoldrins.[2] I was feared to wash my face, lest the water grew ochre. That the Jaundice was in the house was plain; but whether it was me only that had it, or a' the rest likewise, was mair than I could tell. That the yellow I saw wasna in them, but in me, was hard to believe, when I luckit on them; yet I thocht on green specks, and the stained wundows in Windermere Station, and reasoned wi' mysel that the discoloration must be in my lens, or pupil, or optic nerve, or apple, or ba' o' the ee; and that I, James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, was The Jaundice.

Tickler. Your portrait, coloured from nature, James, would have been inestimable in after ages, and given rise to much argument among the learned about your origin—the country of your birth. You must have looked cousin-german to the Green Man and Still.

Shepherd. I stoitered to the door, and, just as I feared, the Yarrow was as yellow as a rotten egg—a' the holms the colour o' a Cockney's play-going gloves—the skies like the dirty ochre wa's o' a change-house—the cluds like buckskin breeks—and the sun, the michty sun himsel, wha lends the rainbow its hues, and is never the poorer, looked at me wi' a disconsolate aspeck, as much as to say, "James, James, is it thou or I that has the Jaundice?"

Tickler. Better than the best bits of Abernethy[3] in the *Lancet*, North.

Shepherd. Just as I was gaun to answer the Sun, the Tick Dollaroose attacked baith o' my cheeks—a' my face, lips, chin,

[1] *Leuch*—laughed. [2] *Yellow-yoldrin*—yellow-hammer.

[3] This eminent practitioner, celebrated no less for his eccentricity of manner than for his medical skill, was born in 1764, and died in 1831. He was the author of Surgical Observations, Physiological Essays, &c.

nose, brow, lugs, and crown and back o' my head,—the Angeena Pectoris brought on the Heart-Collapse—and there the three, the Tick, the Angeena, and the Jaundice, a' fell on me at ance, like three English, Scotch, and Eerish regiments stormin a fort, and slaughterin their way wi' the beggonet on to the citadel.

North. That you are alive at this blessed hour, my dearest James, almost exceeds belief, and I begin to suspect that you are not flesh and blood,—a mere Appearance.

Shepherd. Na, faith, a'm a reality; an Appearance is a puir haun at a jug. Yet, sir, the recovery was weel worth a' I paid for it in sufferins. The first time I went out to the knowe yonner, aboon the garden, and gazed and glowered, and better gazed and glowered, on the heavens, the earth, and the air, the three bein' blent thegither to mak up that mysterious thing —a Day o' Glory—I thocht that my youth, like that o' the sun-staring eagle, had been renewed, and that I was ance mair in the verra middle o' the untamed licht and music o' this life, whan a' is fancy and imagination, and friendship and love, and howp,—oh, howp, sir, howp, worth a' the ither blisses ever sent frae Heaven, like a shower o' sunbeams, for it canna be darkenit, far less put out by the mirkest midnight o' meesery, but keeps shinin on like a star, or rather like the moon hersel—a spiritual moon, sir, that "is never hid in vacant interlunar cave."

Tickler. Mixed metaphors these, James.

Shepherd. Nane the waur o' that, Timothy—I felt about ane-and-twunty—and oh, what an angelical being was a lassie then comin wadin through the ford! At every step she took, after launin wi' her white feet, havin letten doun fa' her cloud-like claes wi' a blush, as she keepit lookin roun' and roun' for a whyleock, to see gin ony ee had been on her, as her limbs came silveryin through the water—

North. The Ladies, James, in a bumper.

Shepherd. The leddies.—A track o' flowers keepit lenthenin alang the greensward as she walked awa, at last, quite out o' sicht.

Tickler. And this you call recovering from the Tic-Douloureux, the Angina Pectoris, and the Jaundice, James?

Shepherd. Few roses are there about Mount Benger, and nae honeysuckle; and, at the time I speak o', the field-pease

and beans werena in bloom; yet a' the hollow o' the air was filled wi' sweetness, mair like than onything else to the smell o' thyme, and sic a scent wad hae tauld a blin' man that he was breathin in paradise. The shapes o' the few trees that grew on that part o' the Yarrow, became mair gracefu', and the trees themsels seemed as if leevin creturs when the breeze cam near them, and shook their tresses in the moonshine, like lassies lettin out their hair to dry, after they hae been bathin in some shady linn, and lauchin about their sweethearts.

Tickler. James, you cannot get rid of your besetting imagery.

Shepherd. Slawly, slawly did I fa' back into mysel—into a man o' fifty and some few years mair, into something duller, deader, mair obscure—yet no unhappy either, or inclined to utter ony complaints, but still owerburdened by a dimness, maist a darkness o' soul — and weel weel aware, that though you were to crown my brow wi' the garlands o' glory, and to set a diadem on the crown o' my head, and for Prime Minister to give me Power, and Health for my Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Pleasure for Home Secretary, never, never, never could James Hogg be what he ance was; nor, as lang as he leeves, enjoy as much happiness, put it a'thegither, and multiply it by decimals, as used lang, lang ago aften to be crooded into ae single hour, till I thocht my verra heart wad hae burst wi' bliss, and that the stars o' heaven, pure as they are, burned dim with envy of us twa beneath the milk-white thorn, the trysting-thorn for the Flowers o' the Forest, for countless generations.

(*Enter* Mr Ambrose, *with Copper-kettle No. I.*)

North. Who rung?

Ambrose. I have taken note of the time of the last four jugs, sir, and have found that each jug gains ten minutes on its predecessor—so ventured——

Shepherd. Oh, Mr Ambrose, but you wad be a gran' observer o' the motions o' the heavenly bodies, in an Astronomical Observatory!—The jug's this moment dead. There — in wi' a' the sugar, and a' the whusky, — fill up, Awmrose, fill up. That stroop's[1] a gran' pourer, and you're a prime experimenter in hydrostatics. [*Exit* Mr Ambrose, *susurrans.*

[1] *Stroop*—spout.

Tickler. You knew the late Malcolm Gillespie[1] of Crombie Cottage, I think, James? He died game.

Shepherd. Only middlin. He had a cross o' the dunghill in him—which is the case wi' a' the cruel.

North. He should not have got faint in the Court-House. On the scaffold his behaviour was firm enough—and——

Shepherd. He was an infamous ruffian—and mony a prime worm he broke — mony a sweet-workin stell,— and much he bragged of his duty and his daring—but a' the while the fearless reprobate was livin on forgery; and feenally, naething wad satisfy him but to burn the house o' sin by the hauns o' his abandoned limmers. Yet he declared before God, that he died—innocent.

North. It is said that high interest was used to procure a commutation of his punishment. I hope not. No man who knew right from wrong would have dared to put his hand to a petition for mercy to such a profligate and hardened villain. Pardon would, in his case, have been defiance of justice—the triumph of vice, crime, and iniquity, over the laws. But there are people who will petition for the forfeited life of a felon, a forger and an incendiary, who will be shy of subscribing a pound for the relief of the blind aged widow, who, industrious as long as she saw Heaven's light, is now a palsied but uncomplaining pauper.

Tickler. Nothing seems much clearer to me, sir, than the natural direction of charity. Would we all but relieve, according to the measure of our means, those objects immediately within the range of our personal knowledge, how much of the worst evil of poverty might be alleviated! Very poor people, who are known to us to have been honest, decent, and industrious, when industry was in their power, have a claim on us, founded on that our knowledge, and on vicinity and neighbourhood, which have in themselves something sacred and endearing to every good heart. One cannot, surely, always pass by, in his walks for health, restoration, or delight, the lone wayside beggar, without occasionally giving him an alms. Old, careworn, pale, drooping, and emaciated creatures,

[1] Malcolm Gillespie was a supervisor in the excise. He was tried at Aberdeen, 28th September 1827, and executed 16th November following, for forgery, and uttering false money. He was also charged with fire-raising, to cheat the insurance.

who pass us by without looking beseechingly at us, or even lifting their eyes from the ground—cannot often be met with, without exciting an interest in us for their silent and unobtrusive sufferings or privations. A hovel, here and there, round and about our own comfortable dwelling, attracts our eyes by some peculiar appearance of penury—and we look in, now and then, upon its inmates, cheering their cold gloom with some small benefaction. These are duties all men owe to distress; they are easily discharged, and even such tender mercies as these are twice blessed.

Shepherd. Oh, sir, you speak weel. I like you when you're wutty—I admire you when you're wise—I love and venerate you when you're good—and what greater goodness can there be in a world like this than charity?

Tickler. But then, my worthy friend, for one man to interfere with another's charities is always delicate—nay, dangerous; for how can the benevolent stranger, who comes to me to solicit my aid to some poor family, whose necessities he wishes to relieve, know either my means, or the claims that already lie upon me, and which I am doing my best to discharge? He asks me for a guinea—a small sum, as he thinks—the hour after I have given two to a bed-ridden father of a large family, to save his bed and bed-clothes from being sold at the Cross.

Shepherd. But you maunna be angry at him—unless he's impident — and duns you for your donation. That's hard to thole.

Tickler. Yet, am I to apologise to him—uninformed, or misinformed, as he is about me and mine—for not drawing my purse-strings at his solicitation? Am I to explain how it happens that I cannot comply—to tell him that, in fact, I am at that moment poor? He is not entitled to hold such a colloquy with me — yet, if I simply say, "Sir, I must refuse your petition," he probably condemns me as a heartless hunks—an unmerciful miser—and, among his friends, does not abstain from hints on my selfish character.

Shepherd. There's, for the maist part, I am willing to believe, a spice o' goodness about the greater number even o' the gadders-about wi' subscription papers.

Tickler. But a spice, James, is not enough. Their motives are of too mixed a kind. Vanity, idleness, mere desire to

escape ennui, curiosity even, and a habit of busy-bodyism, which is apt to grow on persons who have no very strong ties of affection binding them to home, do sadly impair the beauty of beneficence.

Shepherd. They do that—yet in a great populous city like Embro', much good must often be done by charitable people formin themselves into associations — findin out the deservin puir, gettin siller subscribed for them, visitin them in their ain houses, especially in the winter time, sir, geein them a cart o' coals, or a pair o' blankets, or some worsted stockins, and so on—for a sma' thing is often a great help to them just hangin on the edge o' want; and a meal o' meat set afore a hungry family, wha hadna expeckit to break their fast that day, not only fills their stamacks, puir sowls, but warms their verra hearts, banishin despair, as by a God-gift, and awaukenin Hope, that had expired alang wi' the last spark on the ashy hearth.

Tickler. Give me your hand, James. James, your health—God bless you. Certainly a young lady—or a middle-aged one either—never looks better—so well—as when in prudence and meekness she seeks to cheer with charity the hovels of the poor. I know several such—and though they may too often be cheated and imposed on—that is not their fault,—and the discharge of a Christian duty cannot fail of being accompanied by a great overbalance of good.

Shepherd. Oh man! Mr Tickler—but you hae a maist pleasant face the noo—you're a real gude cretur—and I wad fling a glass o' het water in the face o' onybody that wad daur to speak ill o' a single letter in your name.—Is't no time, think ye, sir, to be ringin for the eisters?—I hear them comin!—That cretur Awmrose has the gift o' divination!

[*Enter* Mr Ambrose, *his Brother from Gabriel's Road, the* Two Stephens, Tappytoorie, *and* King Pepin, *each with a Board of Oysters.*

Tickler. Fat, fair, and fifty!——

Shepherd. What desperate breedy beasts eisters maun be,—for they tell me that Embro' devoors a hunder thousand every day.

North. Why, James, that is only about two oysters to every three mouths. I am happy to see, from their condition, that the oyster population is not pressing too hard on the means

of subsistence. They will be spared the Report from the Emigration Committee.

Shepherd. Tak them, richt and left, sir,—this way,—first frae ae brodd, and then frae anither—crossing hauns like a young leddy playin a kittle piece on the Piawno. Tappy-toorie—some pots o' porter. I think I see a cauld roun' o' beef ower-by yonner on the sideboard, lowerin amang a fillet o' veal, a pie and a pasty, a how-towdie, and some sma'ish burds, maist likely snipes and wudcocks—for the lang-bills is come ower noo frae Norway—just like a three-decker lying at anchor in the middle o' as mony frigates. Yon's what I ca', sirs, a Core o' Reserve.

North. Were you at the Cattle Show, James, t'other day, in the Court of the Oil-Gas Institution?

Shepherd. Eisters dinna interrupt talkin.—There's a beauty, Mr North,—obleedge me by allooin me to let it doun your throat. Haud back your head a wee—open Sesame—there it goes, without ever a chack,—didna ye hear't play plowp in the stamach?

Tickler. Pleasing picture of piety!—The young cormorant feeding his old father.

Shepherd. I was at the Show. But sic anither prize-bill as yon I never saw—a wee wizzened, waif-and-stray-looking cretur—sic a tawty[1] hide—a mere rickle[2] o' banes—sae weak that he could hardly staun',—and evidently a martyr to the rheumatism, the asthma, and the consumption.

North. But the breed, James—the breed!

Shepherd. Nae doubt the breed was gude, for it was Mr Rennie's; but sic a specimen! I defy ony judge, since the days o' Gamaliel, to decide on the merits o' a beast in sic a condition as yon. Suppose, sir, by way of argumentative illustration, that a prize was to be given to the finest young man of eighteen that could be produced, and that from among ever so many noble fellows, all instinct with health and vigour, the judge were to single out ae urchin, a lean, lank, yellow, and loose-skinned skeleton, and put a belt round his waist as being the picked man of all England!

North. So might be his framework.

Shepherd. What? Do ye mean his skeleton? But the prize

[1] *Tawty*—matted. [2] *Rickle*—heap, ridge.

wasna for skeletons—if it was, a' the competitors should hae been prepared. Or take, sir, a shipwrecked sailor aff a rock in the middle o' the sea, where he has been leevin, puir fallow, on some moothfu's o' tangle, scarted aff the sluddery stanes, for maist pairt o' a fortnicht, and wringin the rain out o' his troosers, to keep doun his ragin thirst—and compare him wi' me—just me mysel sittin here wi' a brodd o' eisters on ilka haun—after a denner the day wi' some freens in the Auld Town—and a December's eating, the month that's allooed to be the verra best in the haill towmont, and wha wad daur to pass judgment on the comparative pints o' sic a Sailor and sic a Shepherd? As for the bit bill, he was leevin then—though nae doubt he's dead noo—for it was a raw day, and he keepit shiverin in his pen like an aspen.

North. I confess, James, there is something in what you say—yet a bull bred by Mr Rennie of Linton, and approved by Captain Barclay of Ury, must have been, in spite of his delicate state of health, a rare animal.

Shepherd. There's no twa mair honourable and cleverer chiels in a' Scotland—but it's just perfectly impossible to decide atween ane or twa brute creturs—or human anes either—when the tane's a' that it ought to be, or can be, in health and speerits, and the tither hingin head and tail, little better than an atomy—it's just perfectly impossible.

North. The Highland Society, James, the promoters of these great Cattle Shows, is the most useful one in all Scotland; and you will be glad, I am sure, to hear that, under their auspices, Mr Blackwood is about to publish, quarterly, an Agricultural Magazine,[1] for which he has already found an Editor of rare accomplishments.

Shepherd. Oh, man, but I'm real glad o' that!—sic a buik's a great desiderawtum. I'll write for't mysel, and sae will a thousan' ithers;—but still I doubt the possibility o' judgin fairly o' a bill[2] like yon, though, nae doubt, he wad hae been a beauty if in fine ruddy health, like a bailie or a bishop. It

[1] The *Journal of Agriculture* was started by Mr Blackwood in May 1828. Mr Low, Professor of Agriculture in the University of Edinburgh, was its first editor. It was afterwards conducted with great ability, for many years, by Mr Stephens, author of the *Book of the Farm*, an unrivalled agriculturist, both in theory and in practice.

[2] *Bill*—bull.

was just the *vice versâ* wi' yon prize pig. She was just a fat grunt, and had lost a' appearance o' a human cretur. Extremes should be avoided; for, as Horace says,

> " Sunt certi denique fines,
> Quos ultra citraque nequit consistere rectum."

North. Very sensible, James. In like manner, with respect to horses. A colt, whose sire was a Regulus, and dam a Mandane, must almost necessarily be a fine colt; but shut him up in an empty stable till he is starved, and just able to hobble, and is there a man in all England who will take upon him to say that he can still fairly compare all his points with those of another colt at the moment of starting for the St Leger, and backed at even against the field?

Shepherd. Let the judge ken that the colt belangs to Mr Petre or Lord Darlington, and name sire and dam, and let him also ken the inferior lineage of the ither competitor, and in spite o' himsel he will prefer the starvelin, and the mair because he is a starvelin; for, if filled up and fattened to the proper pitch, wadna he indeed be a pictur? But it's fause reasonin!

North. James, you astonish me by your knowledge of the turf. You are a perfect Gully.[1]

Shepherd. No me. I never saw a horse-race for higher stakes than five pounds and a saddle. But nae races for siller or leather like a—broose.[2] I had ance a din[3] powny, about fourteen hands but an inch, that I coft frae a set o' tinklers, that beat a' for gallopin sin' the days o' Childers or Eclipse. I wadna hae feared to hae run him against Fleur-de-lis, or Acteon, or Memnon, or Mameluke, or Camel, or Mullattoe, for a thousan' guineas.

North. Weight for inches, James.

Shepherd. Deevil mind the wecht. Pats-and-Pans never ran sae weel's whan he was ridden dooble—me and a weel-grown lass ahint me, for I never could thole thin anes a' my days. His fav'rite distance, carryin dooble, was twal miles; and he used generally to do't, up hill and doun brae, within the half-hour. Indeed, he never came to his speed till about

[1] John Gully, originally distinguished in the prize-ring, amassed a large fortune by his subsequent speculations on the turf.

[2] *Broose*—a race at country weddings. [3] *Din*—dun.

the middle o' the fourth mile—and siccan a cretur for wund! I never saw him blawn but ance, and that was after bringin the howdie ahint me, a' the way frae Selkirk up to Douglas Burn—no short o' eighteen miles, and bein' just taen aff the gerse.

North. Still, at Newmarket or Doncaster, James——

Shepherd. He wad hae left them a' as if they had been stannin—provided they had allooed me to carry as muckle wecht's I chose; for Pats-and-Pans never ran steddy under twal stane at the least, and wi' a feather he wad hae swerved ower the ropes, and played the mischief wi' the carriages.—Where's Mr Tickler?

North. I saw him slip away a little ago—just as he had cleared his boards——

Shepherd. I never missed him till the noo. Is he aff to Ducraw's,[1] think ye?—Yet it's ower late, for isna that ten that thae bits o' Fairies are chappin?

North. Have you seen Ducrow? He is indeed a prodigy.

Shepherd. After a', sir, it canna be denied that the human race are maist extraordinary creturs. What canna they, by constant practice, be brought to perform? It's a perplexin place, yon Circus: ae man draps doun in the dust, and awa out o' the door on his doup; anither after him, wi' a' celerity, on his elbows; a third after him again, soomin on dry laun' at the rate o' four miles an hour; a fourth, perpendicular on the pawms o' his hauns, and a fifth on the croon o' his head, without ever touchin the grun' wi' his loofs ava. A' the while, the lang-luggit fule, wi' a maist divertin face, balancin himsel cross-leggit on a chair wi' ae fit, it spinnin roun' like a whirligig. Ordinary sittin or walkin seems perfectly stupid after that—feet superfluous, and legs an encumbrance.

North. But Ducrow, James, Ducrow?

Shepherd. Then in comes a tall, pleasant-lookin fallow o' a German, ane Herr Benjamin, wha thinks nae mair o' balancin a beam o' wood, that micht be a roof-tree to a house, on his wee finger, than if it were a wundle-strae; then gars a

[1] Exhibition of horsemanship. Certain pecuniary losses which this unrivalled equestrian sustained so preyed upon his mind as to induce insanity, and ultimately occasion his death. Yet he died (in 1842) worth, it is said, upwards of £60,000.

sodger's musket, wi' the point o' the beggonet on his chin, spin roun' till it becomes nearly invisible; no content wi' that, up wi' a ladder aneath his lip, wi' a laddie on't, as easily as if it were a leddy's fan, and, feenally, concludes wi' twa mail-cotch wheels on the mouth o' him——

North. But Ducrow, James, Ducrow?

Shepherd. Yon's a beautifu' sicht, sir—at ance music, dancin, statuary, painting, and poetry! The creturs aneath him soon cease to seem horses, as they accelerate round the circus, wi' a motion a' their ain, unlike to that o' ony ither four-footed quadrupeds on the face o' this earth, mair gracefu' in their easy swiftness than the flight of Arabian coursers ower the desert, and to the eye o' imagination some rare and new-created animals, fit for the wild and wondrous pastimes o' that greatest o' a' magicians—Man.

North. But Ducrow, James, Ducrow?

Shepherd. As if inspired, possessed by some spirit, over whom the laws o' attraction and gravity hae nae control, he dallies wi' danger, and bears a charmed life, safe as the pigeon that you will afttimes see gang tapsy-turvy amang the clouds, and tumblin doun to within a yard o' the earth, then reascend, like an arrow, into the sunshine, and, wheelin roun' and roun' in aft-repeated circles, extend proudly a' its burnished plumage to the licht, till the een are pained, and the brain dizzy to behold the aerial brichtness beautifyin the sky.

North. Bravo, James—excellent—go on.

Shepherd. Wha the deevil was Castor, that the ancients made a god o' for his horsemanship—a god o' and a star—in comparison wi' yon Ducraw? A silly thocht is a Centaur—a man and a horse in ane—in which the dominion o' the man is lost, and the superior incorpsed wi' the inferior natur! Ducraw "rides on the whirlwind, and directs the storm." And oh, sir! how saftly, gently, tenderly, and like the decin awa o' fast fairy music in a dream, is the subsidin o' the motion o' a' the creturs aneath his feet, his ain gestures, and his ain attitudes, and his ain actions, a' correspondin and congenial wi' the ebbin flicht; even like some great master o' music wha disna leave aff when the soun' is at its heicht, but gradually leads on the sowls o' the listeners to a far profounder hush o' silence than reigned even before he woke to ecstasy his livin lyre.

North. Go it again, my dear James.

Shepherd. Yon's neither walkin, dancin, nor loupin, nor rinnin, nor soomin, nor hingin, nor floatin, nor fleein, but an inconceivable conglomeration o' them a'—sic as I used sometimes to experience whan lyin in a dream on a sunny knowe by St Mary's Loch—believin mysel a disembodied spirit—and withouten wings, geein the eagle and the hawk the go-by, richt afore the wind,—and skimmin the real stars, just as skaters skim their images aneath the ice, and fearing not the mountain-taps, from which, every time I touched them wi' my foot, upsprung I again into the blue lift, and felt roun' my brows the cool caller halo o' the harvest-moon.

North. Empty your tumbler, James,—to Dacrow's health.

Shepherd. That I will. But I howp the Circus 'ill no injure the Theatre?

North. Not at all. Admirable Murray—incomparable Mackay—perfect Mrs Siddons, and elegant Miss Gray—cleverest Jones—accomplished Pritchard—manly Denham—genteel Stanley[1]——

Shepherd. Gie ower your epithets—for neither you nor ony man can describe an actress or an actor in ae word;—but I agree wi' you,—the mair general the speerit o' pastime, the better will the Theatre fill in the lang-run; and the manager and his sister will aye be supported by their freen, the people o' Embro', wha admires in them the union o' professional genius and private virtue.

North. Their health and happiness—in the jug, James—in the jug.

Shepherd. A stranger that chanced to be present at a Noctes without kennin wha we twa was, wad never jalouse us to be Leeterautee, Mr North. We seldom hae ony brainless bother about books. Sic talk maistly marks the blockhead.

North. You know, James, that I would not give an intelligent and independent Tweedside sheep-farmer for a score of ordinary town essay-mongers, poetasters, and getters-up-of-articles. The thoughts and feelings of the Pastoral run in a channel scooped out by themselves—they murmur with a music of their own, and ever and anon overflow their banks

[1] Members of the Edinburgh theatrical company. The "elegant Miss Gray" afterwards became the wife of Mr Murray the manager. Mr Murray's sister, Mrs Henry Siddons, was the widow of a son of the great actress, Sarah Siddons.

in a style that is floodlike and impressive. He of the common stair[1] is like a canal-cut, navigable only to flat-bottoms, muddy in the clearest weather, and its characterless banks wearisome with their gritty gravel-walks, on which you meet nothing more lively than an occasional old blind horse or two towing coals, or a passage-boat crowded with the paltriest people, all sorely sick of one another, themselves, the locks, and that part of Scotland in general, the women staring at you from below ill-shaped bonnets of coarse dirty chip, and the men crowned with third-head waterproof hats—napless and greasy—strolling candle-snuffers, petitioners, editors, contributors, and a sickly man of tailors perhaps, trying change of place and posture. Whereas——

Shepherd. Stop a wee, and I'll sing you "Blue Bonnets"—by a fine fallow—a freen o' mine in Leith. I promised him that I wad sing't at a Noctes.

Write, write, tourist and traveller—
Fill up your pages, and write in good order;
Write, write, scribbler and driveller—
Why leave such margins? Come nearer the border.

Many a laurel dead, flutters around your head;
Many a *tome* is your *memento mori:*
Come from your garrets, then, sons of the quill and pen—
Write for snuff-shops, if you write not for glory.

Come from your rooms, where the farthing wick's burning—
Come with your tales—speak they gladness or woe;
Come from your small-beer to vinegar turning—
Come where the Port and the Burgundy flow.

Fame's trump is sounding,—topics abounding,—
Leave then, each scribbler, your high attic storey;
Critics shall many a day speak of your book, and say—
"He wrote for the snuff-shop—he wrote not for glory."

Write, write, tourist and traveller—
Fill up your pages, and write in good order;
Write, write, scribbler and driveller—
Why leave such margins? Come nearer the border.

North. Very well, indeed. A mere literary man, James, is a contemptible creature. Indeed I often wish that I had

[1] Many of the Edinburgh houses consist of separate flats, which are entered by means of a "common stair."

flourished before the invention of printing, or even of writing. What think you, James, of a Noctes in hieroglyphics?

Shepherd. I scarcely ken; but I think ane wadna look amiss in the Chinese. Wi' respeck to mere literary men, oh dear me, sir! hoo I do gaunt[1] when they come out to Mount Benger! They canna shute, they canna fish, they canna loup, they canna warsle, they canna soom, they canna put the stane, they canna fling the hammer, they canna even drive a gig, they canna kiss a lassie in an aff-haun and pleasant manner, without offendin her feelins, as through the dews she "comes wadin all alane;" and what's perhaps the maist contemptible o' a', they canna, to ony effeck, drink whusky. Ae glass o' pure speerits on the hill afore breakfast wad gie them a sick headache; and after denner, although the creturs hae nae objections to the jug, oh, but their heads are wake,[2] wake—before the fire has got sun-bricht, they are lauchin-fou —you then fin' them out to be rejected contributors to *Blackwood;* and you hear that they're Whigs frae their wee, sharp, shrill, intermittin, dissatisfied, and rather disgustin snore, like a soun' ane aften hears at nicht in moors and mosses, but whence proceedin ane knows not, except it be frae some wild-fool distressed in sleep by a stamach fu' o' slug-worms mixed wi' mire—for he aiblins leeves by suction.

North. He is all mind, James; king of the Coteries, and monarch of all the Albums. His mother laments that he is not in Parliament; and, up to the Preface,[3] used to hint that he had a finger in *Kenilworth* and *Ivanhoe.*

Shepherd. Yet, after a', it's far frae unamusin to read the verses o' sic creturs. They're aye talkin o' inspiration — o' bein' rapt, and carried awa by the Muses — and ridin on Pegasus — and climbin Parnassus, on their hauns and knees, nae doubt — and drinkin Hippocrene and Helicon, twa kinds o' Greek wine, ance red, but noo tawny; and though no like to flee to the head, yet apt to soor sair on an empty stamach. Yet a' the time there's no a whut mair inspiration, or ravishment, or ridin, or climbin, or drinkin about the bit versifying

[1] *Gaunt*—yawn. [2] *Wake*—weak.

[3] "Up to the Preface,"—that is, previous to Scott's public avowal of the authorship of the Waverley Novels. He laid aside his incognito, first at the public dinner already referred to (vol. i. p. 339, note), and secondly, in the Preface or rather Introduction to the *Chronicles of the Canongate,* 1827.

creturs o' Cockneys, than there is about a grocer's clerk copying out an adverteesement o' sweeties for the newspapers.

North. Yet such Sons of Genius think themselves entitled to become unprincipled, because they can occasionally count their fingers—disdain area-doors,[1] with eyes in fine frenzy rolling—get into a network—that is, James, according to Dr Johnson, a thing equally reticulated and discussated with equal distances between the interstices — a network of small coarse debts—attempt to commit forgery—fall, through ignorance of the forms of business, into the inferior crime of swindling—off on the coach-box of the Carlisle mail to Liverpool; and, by packet that is to sail to-morrow morning, right slick away to the United States.

Shepherd. You're really verra interteenin the nicht, sir; but dinna be ower hard on them a'; for when natur has kindled the spark o' genius in the heart o' a fine out-spoken, enthusiastic, hopefu' callant, wi' bauld bricht een, like far-keekers spyin into futurity, isn't[2] delightfu' to grasp his haun, and to clap him on the shouther, and praise him to his face, as you shove ower the jug to him, and ask him to sing or receet something o' his ain,—and tell ane o' your bairns to gang roun' the table and speak till him, for that he's a freend o' yours, and a gran' fallow, and no to mind even about climbin ontil his knee, and ruggin the curly locks o' him, as black as a raven?

North. How delightful for a town-talk-teazed poor old man, like me, to take refuge, for a month or so, in a deeper solitude even than Buchanan Lodge—the House at the head of the Glen, which, know it ever so well, you still have to search for among so many knolls, some quite bare, some with a birk or two, and some of them each in itself a grove or wood,—self-sown all the trees, brushwood, coppice, and standards.

Shepherd. You're getting desperate descriptive in your dotage — sir — dinna froon — there's nae dishonour in dotage, when nature's its object. The aulder we grow, our love for her gets tenderer and mair tender, for this thocht often comes across our heart, "in the bosom o' this bonny green earth, in how few years—shall I be laid—dust restored to dust!" That's a' I mean by dotage.

North. What a difference, James, between the din of twenty

[1] "Disdain area-doors,"—that is, disdain to officiate as lawyers' clerks in rooms on the sunk flat.

[2] *Isn't*—is it not.

little waterfalls, that absolutely seem pursuing one another away down the glen, and as many hackney coaches jolting along a street! A composure in all faces and figures that you meet going out to work or coming in from it—or sitting or walking about the house! Quiet without dulness—without languor—peace! There the gloaming is indeed pensive—each star as it rises sparkles contentment—and the moon is felt to belong more especially to this one valley, most beautiful of all the valleys of this earth. Not an action of all my life—not a word I ever uttered—not a tale, or poem, or article, or book in two, three, or four volumes, that I ever wrote—not one of all the panegyrics, anathemas, blessings, curses, prayers, oaths, vows, and protestations, ever pronounced, denounced, and announced anent me, known to one single dweller in all the vale! There am I strictly anonymous. That crutch is as the crutch of any ordinary rheumatic—and I, James, have the unspeakable satisfaction of feeling myself—a Cipher.

Shepherd. What are ye hummin at, sir. You're no gaun to sing?

(NORTH *sings.*)

Why does the sun shine on me,
When its light I hate to see:
Fain I'd lay me down and dee,
For o' life I'm weary!

O 'tis no thy frown I fear—
'Tis thy smile I canna bear—
'Tis thy smile my heart does tear,—
When thou triest to cheer me.

Ladies fair hae smiled on me—
A' their smiles nae joy could gie—
Never lo'ed I ane but thee,
And I loe thee dearly!

On the sea the moonbeams play—
Sae they'll shine when I'm away—
Happy then thou'lt be, and gay,
When I wander dreary!

Shepherd. Some auld fragmentary strain, remindin him, nae doubt, o' joys and sorrows lang ago! He has a pathetic vice—but sing what tune he may, it still slides awa into "Stroud Water."

North. Oh, James! a dream of the olden time——

Shepherd. Huts! huts! I wush you maunna be gettin rather a wee fuddled, sir—hafflins fou. Preserve me! are ye greetin? The whusky's maist terrible strong—and I suspect has never been chrissened. It's time we be aff! Oh! what some o' them he has knouted wad gie to see him in this condition! But there's the wheels o' the cotch. Or is't a fire-engine?

(*Enter* AMBROSE *to announce the arrival of the coach.*) Dinna look at him, Mr Ambrose—he's gotten the toothache—and likewise some ingan in his een. This is aye the way wi' him noo—he fa's aff a' on a sudden—and begins greetin at naething, or at things that's rather amusin as itherwise. There's mony thousan' ways o' gettin fou—and I ken nae mair philosophical employment, than, in sic cityations, the study o' the varieties o' human character.

North. Son James——

Shepherd. Pardon, Father—'twas but a jeest. I've kent you noo the better pairt o' twunty years—and never saw I thae bricht een—that bricht brain obscured,—for wi' a' our daffin—our weel-timed daffin—our *dulce est desipere in loco*—that's Latin, you ken—we return to our hame, or our lodgings, as sober as Quakers—and as peacefu', too,—well-wishers, ane and a', to the haill human race—even the verra Wheegs.

North. Sometimes, my dear Shepherd, my life from eighteen to twenty-four is an utter blank, like a moonless midnight—at other times, oh! what a refulgent day! Had you known me then, James, you would——

Shepherd. No hae liked you half as weel's I do noo—for then, though you was doutless tall and straucht as a tree, and able and willin baith to fecht man, dowg, or deevil, wi' een, tongue, feet, or hauns, yet, as doutless, you was prouder nor Lucifer. But noo that you're bent doun no that muckle, just a wee, and your "lyart haffits wearing thin and bare," sae pleesant, sae cheerfu', sae fu' o' allooances for the fauts and frailties o' your fellow-creturs, provided only they proceed na frae a bad heart—it's just perfeckly impossible no to love the wise, merry auld man——

North. James, I wish to consult you and Mr Ambrose about the propriety and prudence of my marrying——

Shepherd. Never heed ye propriety and prudence, sir, in mairrying, ony mair than ither folk. Mairry her, sir—mairry

her—and I'll be godfather—for the predestined mither o' him will be an Episcopaulian—to wee Christopher.

North. As the Reis Effendi well observes to the interpreters of the Three Powers—we must not name a child till we have ascertained its sex.[1]—But, Ambrose, open the Ear of Dionysius.

[MR AMBROSE *opens a secret door, and flings it open.*

Shepherd. Mr Gurney—the short-haun writer! Dinna be frighted, sir. What a cozy contrivance! A green-baized table o' his ain—twa wax cawnles—a nice wee bit ingle—and a gey[2] big Jug!

North. Not a whisper, James, that Mr Gurney does not catch. I will explain the principle to you at our first leisure. You know the Elements of Acoustics?

Shepherd. Cow-steeks,—Cow's horns. What do you mean? Let me try your toddy, Mr Gurney. Oh, man! but its strong. Good-night, sir; dinna steer till ye extend.[3] Come awa, Mr North—Awmrose, rax him ower the crutch.

North. What a hobbletehoy I am, James—*Allons.* But hark ye, James—are you the author of the "Relief Meeting?" No? I wish I knew how to direct a letter to him about his excellent article. Let us off to Southside—and sup with Tickler.

Glee—for Three Voices.

Fall de rall de,
Fall, lall, lall de,
Fall de lall de,
Fall, lall le, &c.

[*Exeunt ambo et* AMBROSE.

[1] After the battle of Navarino (fought on the 20th of October 1827), the allied ambassadors at Constantinople, British, French, and Russian, desired to know in what light the Porte would consider hostilities if occasioned by Ibrahim Pacha refusing to comply with the declared will of the allied courts in respect to the affairs of Greece. His excellency the Reis Effendi, who had not yet received intelligence of the defeat of the Turkish fleet at Navarino, replied, "We hope that no hostilities have taken place, and we do not feel disposed to declare what we would do, or not do, in certain cases. *People do not give a name to a child before it is born and its sex known.*"—See *Annual Register*, 1827, p. 319.

[2] *Gey*—rather.

[3] That is, do not stir till you have written out your short-hand notes.

XVII.

(OCTOBER 1828.)

Scene, — Large Dining-room.—Time uncertain.—NORTH *discovered sitting upright in his easy-chair, with arms akimbo on his crutch, asleep.*

Enter the SHEPHERD *and* MR AMBROSE.

Shepherd. Lord safe us! only look at him sitting asleep. What'n a face! — Dinna leave the parlour, Mr Awmrose, for it would be fearsome to be alane wi' the Vision.

Ambrose. The heat of the fire has overcome the dear old gentleman — but he will soon awake; and may I make so bold, Mr Hogg, as to request that you do not disturb——

Shepherd. What! Wad ye be for my takin aff my shoon, and glidin ower the Turkey carpet on my stockin soles, like a pard or panther on the Libyan sands?

Ambrose (*sauviter in modo*). I beg pardon, sir, but you have got on your top-boots[1] this evening.

Shepherd. Eh! sae I hae. And tryin to rug them aff, tae and heel, aneath the fit o' a chair, wad be sure to wauken him wi' ane o' thae froons o' his, aneuch to daunt the deevil.

Ambrose. I never saw Mr North frown, Mr Hogg, since we came to Picardy. I hope, sir, you think him in his usual health?

Shepherd. That's a gude ane, Awmrose. You think him near his latter end, 'cause he's gien up that hellish froon that formerly used sae aften to make his face frichtsome?

[1] Top-boots, at this period not uncommon, were a favourite attire of the Shepherd.

Ye ne'er saw him froon sin' ye came to Picardy?—Look, there—only look at the cretur's face—

> A darkness comes across it, like a squall
> Blackening the sea.

Ambrose. I fear he suffers some inward qualm, sir. His stomach, I fear, sir, is out of order.

Shepherd. His stamach is ne'er out o' order. It's an ingine that aye works sweetly. But what think you, Mr Awmrose, o' a quawm o' conscience?

Ambrose. Mr North never, in all his life, I am sure, so much as injured a fly. Oh! dear me! he must be in very great pain.

Shepherd.—

> So froon'd he ance, when in an angry parle
> He smote the sliding Pollock on the ice.

Ambrose. You allude, sir, to that day at the curling on Duddingston Loch. But you must allow, Mr Hogg, that the brute of a carter deserved the crutch. It was pretty to see the old gentleman knock him down. The crack on the ice made by the carter's skull was like a star, sir.

Shepherd. The clud's blawn aff—and noo his countenance is pale and pensive, and no without a kind o' reverend beauty, no very consistent wi' his waukin character. But the faces o' the most ferocious are a' placid in sleep and in death. That is an impressive fizziological and sykological fack.

Ambrose. How can you utter the word death in relation to him, Mr Hogg? Were he dead, the whole world might shut up shop.

Shepherd. Na, na. Ye micht, but no the warld. There never leeved a man the warld missed, ony mair than a great, green, spreading simmer tree misses a leaf that fa's doun on the moss aneath its shadow.

Ambrose. Were ye looking round for something, sir?

Shepherd. Ay; gie me that cork aff yon table—I'll burn't on the fire, and then blacken his face wi' coom.

Ambrose (*placing himself in an imposing attitude between* North *and the* Shepherd). Then it must be through my body, sir. Mr Hogg, I am always proud and happy to see you in my house; but the mere idea of such an outrage—

such sacrilege—horrifies me; the roof would fall down—the whole land——

Shepherd. Tuts, man, I'm only jokin. Oh! but he wad mak a fine pictur! I wish John Watson Gordon were but here to pent his face in iles. What a mass o' forehead! an inch atween every wrinkle, noo scarcely visible in the calm o' sleep! Frae eebree to croon o' the head a lofty mountain o' snaw—a verra Benledi—wi' rich mineral ore aneath the surface, within the bowels o' the skull, copper, silver, and gold! Then what a nose! Like a bridge, along which might be driven cart-loads o' intellect; — neither Roman nor Grecian, hookit nor cockit, a wee thocht inclined to the ae side, the pint being a pairt and pendicle o' the whole, an object in itsel, but at the same time finely smoothed aff and on intil the featur; while his nostrils, small and red, look as they would emit fire, and had the scent o' a jowler or a vultur.

Ambrose. There never were such eyes in a human head——

Shepherd. I like to see them sometimes shut. The instant Mr North leaves the room, after denner or sooper, it's the same thing as if he had carried aff wi' him twa o' the fowre cawnles.

Ambrose. I have often felt that, sir,—exactly that,—but never could express it. If at any time he falls asleep it is just as if the waiter or myself had snuffed out——

Shepherd. Let my image alane, Mr Awmrose, and dinna ride it to death — double. But what I admire maist o' a' in the face o' him, is the auld man's mouth. There's a warld's difference, Mr Awmrose, atween a lang mouth and a wide ane.

Ambrose. There is, Mr Hogg, there is — they are two different mouths entirely. I have often felt that, but could not express it——

Shepherd. Mr Awmrose, you're a person that taks notice o' a hantle o' things—and there canna be a stronger proof, or a better illustration, of the effeck o' the conversation o' a man o' genius like me, than its thus seeming to express former feelings and fancies of the awditor—whereas, the truth is, that it disna wauken them for the second time, but communicates them for the first — for believe me, that the idea o' the cawnles, and eke o' the difference wi' a distinction atween wide mouths and lang anes, never entered your mind afore, but are baith, *bona feedy*, the property o' my ain intelleck.

Ambrose. I ask you many pardons, Mr Hogg. They are both your own, I now perceive, and I promise never to make use of them without your permission in writing—or——

Shepherd. Poo—I'm no sae pernickitty[1] as that about my original ideas; only when folk do mak use o' my obs, I think it but fair they should add, "as Mr Hogg well said," "as the Ettrick Shepherd admirably remarked," "as the celebrated author o' the *Queen's Wake*, wi' his usual felicity, observed" —and so forth—and ma faith, if some folk that's reckoned yeloquent at roots and petty soopers, were aye to do that, when they're what's ca'd maist brilliant, my name wad be seldom out o' their mouths. Even North himsel——

Ambrose. Do not be angry with me, sir—but it's most delightful to hear Mr North and you bandying matters across the table; ye take such different views always of the same subject; yet I find it, when standing behind the chair, impossible not to agree with you both.

Shepherd. That's just it, Mr Awmrose. That's the way to exhowst a subject. The ane o' us ploughs down the rig, and the ither across, then on wi' the harrows, and the field is like a garden.

Ambrose. See, sir, he stirs!

Shepherd. The crutch is like a very tree growin out o' the earth—so straucht and steddy. I daursay he sleeps wi't in his bed. Noo — ye see his mouth to perfection — just a wee open—showing the teeth—a smile and no a snarl—the thin lips o' him slightly curled and quiverin, and the corners drawn doun a wee, and then up again wi' a swirl, gein wonderfu' animation to his yet ruddy cheeks — a mouth unitin in ane, Mr Jaffray's and that o' Canning's and Cicero's busts.

Ambrose. No young lady—no widow—could look at him now, as he sits there, Mr Hogg, God bless him, without thinking of a first or second husband. Many is the offer he must have refused!

Shepherd. Is that your fashun in Yorkshire, Mr Awmrose, for the women to ask the men to marry?

Ambrose (*susurrans*). *Exceptio probat regulam*—sir.

Shepherd. Faith, ye speak Latin as weel's mysel. Do you ken the Doctrine o' Dreams?

Ambrose. No, sir. Dreaming seems to me a very unintelligible piece of business.

[1] *Pernickitty*—particular.

Shepherd. So thinks Mr Coleridge and "Kubla Khan."[1] But the sowl, ye see, is swayed by the senses — and it's in my power the noo that Mr North's half-sleepin and half-waukin, to mak him dream o' a' sorts o' deaths — nay, to dream that he is himsel dreein[2] a' sorts o' deaths—ane after the ither in ruefu' succession, as if he were some great criminal undergoing capital punishments in the wild warld o' sleep.

Ambrose. That would be worse than blacking my dear master's face—for by that name I love to call him. You must not inflict on him the horror of dreams.

Shepherd. There can be nae such thing as cruelty in a real philosophical experiment. In philosophy, though not in politics, the end justifies the means. Be quiet, Awmrose. There noo, I hae drapt some cauld water on his bald pow—and it's tricklin doun his haffits to his lugs. Whisht! wait a wee! There na, ye see his mouth openin, and his chest heavin, as if the waters o' the deep sea were gullering in his throat. He's now droonin!

Ambrose. I cannot support this—Mr Hogg—I must——

Shepherd. Hand back, sir! Look how he's tryin to streik out his richt leg as if it had gotten the cramp. He's tryin to cry for help. Noo he has risen to the surface for the third and last time. Noo he gies ower strugglin, and sinks doun to the broon-ribbed sand amang the crawlin partens![3]

Ambrose. I must—I shall waken him——

Shepherd. The dreamed death-fit is ower, for the water's dried—and he thinks himsel walkin up Leith Walk, and then straucht intil Mr Blackwood's shop. But noo we'll hang him——

Ambrose. My God! that it should ever have come to this! Yet there is an interest in such philosophical experiments, Mr Hogg, which it is impossible to resist. But do not, I beseech you, keep him long in pain.

Shepherd. There—I just tichten a wee on his wizen his black neck-hankerchief, and in a moment you'll see him get blue in the face. Quick as the "lightning on a collied night," the dream comes athwart his sowl! He's on the scaffold, and the grey-headed, red-eyed, white-faced hangman's lean shrivelled hands are fumblin about his throat, fixing the knot on the juglar! See how puir North clutches

[1] A poem said by Coleridge to have been composed in his sleep.
[2] *Dreein*—suffering. [3] *Partens*—crabs.

the cambric, naturally averse to fling it frae him, as a signal for the drap! It's no aboon a minute since we began the experiment, and yet during that ae minute has he planned and perpetrated his crime—nae dout murder,—concealed himsel for a month in empty hovels, and tombs, in towns,—in glens, and muirs, and woods, in the kintra,—been apprehended, for a reward o' one hundred guineas, by twa red-coated sheriff's-officers—imprisoned till he had nearly run his letters,—stood his trial frae ten in the mornin till twelve o'clock at nicht—examination o' witnesses, the speech o' the croon coonsel, and that o' the coonsel for the panel too, and the soumin up o' the Lord Justice Clerk, nane o' the three shorter than twa hours,—been prayed till, frae daybreak to breakfast, by three ministers,—oh sickenin breakfast!—sat'n in a chair on account o' his gout—a lang lang time on the scaffold—and then aff he goes with a swing, a swirl, and a general shriek—and a' within the space o' some forty seconds o' the time that passes in the outer air world, which we wauken creatures inhabit;—but which is the true time, and which is the fause, it's no for me to say, for I'm nae metaphysician; and judge o' time, either by the shadows on the hill, or on the stane sun-dial, or by the short and lang haun o' our aught-day clock.

Ambrose. Mr Hogg, it is high time this were put an end to,—my conscience accuses me of a great crime—and the moment Mr North awakes, I will make a clean bosom of it, and confess the whole.

Shepherd. What! you'll peach, will you? In that case, it is just as weel to proceed to the last extremity. Rax me ower the carvin knife, and I'll guillotine him——

Ambrose. Shocking, shocking, Mr Hogg!

(*The* SHEPHERD *and* AMBROSE *struggle violently for the possession of the carving-knife,—amid cries from the latter of "Thieves! Robbers! Fire! Murder!"—and in the struggle they fall against the chimney-piece, to the clash of shovel, poker, and tongs.* BRONTE, *who has been sleeping under* NORTH'S *chair, bursts out with a bull-bellow, a tiger-growl, and a lion-roar—and* NORTH *awakes—collaring the* SHEPHERD).

Bronte. Bow—wow—wow—wow—wow—wow——

Shepherd. Ca' aff your dowg, Mr North,—ca' aff your dowg! He's devourin me——

North (*undisturbed from his former posture*). Gentlemen, what is the meaning of all this—you seem discomposed? James! engaged in the duello with Mr Ambrose? Mr Ambrose! [*Exit* Mr Ambrose, *retrogrediens, much confused.*

Shepherd. I'll ca' him out—I'll ca' him out wi' pistols! He was the first aggressor.

North. Arrange your dress, James, then sit down, and narrate to me truly these *plusquam civilia bella.*

Shepherd. Why, ye see, sir, a gentleman in the hotel, a Russian General, I believe, was anxious to see you sleepin, and to take a sketch o' you in that predicament for the Emperor, and Mr Awmrose insisted on bringin him in, whether I would or no,—and as I know you have an antipathy against having your head taken aff—as naebody can hit the face, and a' the likenesses yet attempted are mere caricatures—I rose to oppose the entrance o' the General. Mr Awmrose put himsel into what I could not but construe a fechtin attitude, though I daursay it was only on the defensive; we yokit, and on me tryin to hough him, we tumbled again' the mantel-piece, and you awoke. This is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

(North *rings the bell violently, and* Mr Ambrose *appears*).

North. Show in the Russian General, sir!

Ambrose. The Russian General, sir!

North. How dare you repeat my words? I say, sir, show in the Russian General.

Shepherd. Haw—haw—haw—haw—haw—haw—haw—haw! I'm like to spleet! Haw—haw—haw—haw—haw—haw!

North (*with dignity*). These manners, sir, may do in Ettrick—or the Forest—where the breed of wild boars is not wholly extirpated—but in Edinburgh we expect——

Shepherd. Na—gin that be the way o't, I maun be on my mettle too. As for your wutticism, sir, about the boars, it's just perfectly contemptible, and, indeed, at the best, nae better than a maist meeserable pun. And as to mainners, I'll bet you a ten-gallon cask to a half-mutchkin, that I'll show an elder in Yarrow-Kirk, ony Sabbath atween this and Christmas, that shall outmainner your ainsel, wi' a' your high breedin, in everything that constitutes true natural

dignity—and as for female mainners, seleck the maist yelegant and fashionable leddy that you see walkin alang Princes Street, wi' a bonnet bigger than a boyne,[1] atween three and four o' the afternoon, when the street's like a stream, and gin I'dinna bring frae the Forest, within a mile's range, wi' Mount Benger the centre o' the circle, a bare-leggit lassie, wi' hauns, aiblins, red and hard wi' milkin the coos, wi' naething on her head but a bit pinchbeck kame, that shall outmainner your city madam, till she blush black through the red pent on her cheeks—my name's no James Hogg—that's a'. And whether you tak the wager or no, let me tell you to the face o' you, that you're a damned arrogant, upsettin impudent fallow, and that I do not care the crack o' my thoom for you, or your Magazin, or your Buchanan Lodge, were you and they worth ten thousand million times mair than what you ever will be, as lang's your name's Christopher North!

North. James, you are a pretty fellow. Nothing will satisfy you, it seems, but to insult most grossly the old man whom you have first drowned in his sleep, then hanged, and, but for my guardian angel, Ambrose, would have guillotined!

Shepherd. What! and you were pretendin to be asleep a' the while o' the pheelosophical experiments! What a horrid heepocrit! You're really no fit company for plain, simple, honest folk like the like o' me; but as we've been baith to blame, especially you, who began it a' by shammin sleep, let's shake hauns, and say nae mair about it. Do ye ken I'm desperate hungry—and no a little thursty.

(*Re-enter* Mr Ambrose, *in trim apparel and downcast eyes, with a board of oysters*).

North. Bless you, James! You wheel me round in my chair to the table with quite a filial touch. Ay, my dear boy, take a pull at the porter, for you are in a violent perspiration.

Shepherd. Naething like draft!

North. Mr Ambrose, confine the Russian General to his chamber—and see that you keep him in fresh train-oil.

[*Exit* Mr Ambrose, *smiling through his tears.*

North. James, I shrewdly suspect Mr Ambrose is up to our high-jinks.

[1] *Boyne*—a large wooden *tub;* not *pot*, as formerly explained, vol. i. p. 57.

Shepherd. I really begin to jalouse he is. He was sair frichtened at first—but I thocht I heard him geein a bit grunt o' a lauch, a sort o' subpressed nicher, ahint the door, to the flunkeys in the trance, wha had a' flocked thegither in a crood at the cry o' Fire and Murder. Hech, sirs! but the month o' September 's the month after my ain heart—and worth ony ither twa in the year—comin upon you, as it does, after May, June, July, and August, wi' its R and its Eisters—na, that brodd beats a'—ilka shell as wide's my loof—ilka fish like a shot-star—and the tottle o' the whole[1] sooming in its ain saut-sea liccor, aneuch to create an appeteet in the palate o' yon Atomy swingin in Dr Munro's[2] class in the College by himsel during the lang vacation—Puir fallow!

North. Dear to me, James, September, because of the harvest moon——

Shepherd. Haud your tongue, ye heepocrit.—The harvest moon, indeed! Did ye ever ance see her horns, or her lugs, or her een, or her mou', or her chin, or her nose, or her Tootnsamble, as the French say, during a' that September you passed wi' us at Mount Benger the year afore last, when wee Jamie, you ken, had the mizzles?[3]

North. Why, James, there was a perpetual mist——

Shepherd. Frae the toddy-jug. Ye wad aye drink it het—and 'deed I agree wi' you in detestin a blash[4] o' cauld speerits-and-water wi' broon sugar—aneuch to gar you grue, scunner, and bock.[5] Ye wad aye drink it het, and frae gloamin till midnicht assuredly there was a mist; but hoo could you possibly see the moon, ye auld sinner, through the mist, like ane o' Ossian's ghosts, when regularly at sax o'clock you axed me to ripe the ribs, and shut the shutters—and——

North. I rung the bell for that bonny lassie, the "lass with the gowden hair," to come with her brush, which she brandished so prettily, and sweep in the ashes——

Shepherd. I ca'd you an auld sinner—and an auld sinner ye are, my maist excellent sir, though I gladly alloo there's no

[1] The *total* of the *whole*—a phrase the paternity of which may be traced, I believe, to Joseph Hume.

[2] The third medical professor in succession of that name and family in the University of Edinburgh. After teaching anatomy for upwards of fifty years, Dr Munro retired from the professorial chair in 1846, and still flourishes in a green and vigorous old age.

[3] *Mizzles*—measles. [4] *A blash*—a drench. [5] *Bock*—vomit.

a better man, for a' that, 'mang the eight hundred millions inhabiting the earth.

North. Sits still so trigly, James, the silken snood of my Lily of the Lea?

> "Bonny Kilmeny gaed up the glen,
> But it wasna to meet Duneira's men."

Shepherd. The last time I saw your Lily o' the Lea, sir, she was sittin on a stane at the cheek o' the door, wi' a mutch ower her tawty hair, a geyan dirty face, bauchles[1] on, and sooklin twuns.

North. Suckling twins! O Jupiter and Leda! Castor and Pollux!

Shepherd. Ay, just sooklin twuns. But what's there in that to gar you turn up the whites o' your een? Tibbie's married.

North. And I devoutly trust to a man worthy of her beauty, her virtue, her innocence—her——

Shepherd. The tailor carried her aff frae them a'—the flyin tailor o' Ettrick,[2] sir—him that can do fifteen yards, at hap, step, and loup, back and forward on level grun'—stood second ae year in the ring at Carlisle—can put the stane within a foot o' Jedburgh Bell himsel, and fling the hammer neist best ower a' the Border to Geordy Scougal o' Innerleithen.[3]

North. Another phantom of my imagination has melted, like a dewdrop from the earth. To a tailor!

Shepherd. Another phantom o' *my* imagination has melted, like a dewdrop frae the earth—and a sappier eister never played plump intil a human stamack.

North. James, that is a sacrilegious parody on the expression of one of the finest feelings that breathes a sadness over our common humanity. Eat your oysters after your own fashion—but——

Shepherd. O, sir! I wonder to see you, at your time o' life, lamentin that a bit fernytickled[4] kintra lassie, that used to gang atween barn and byre wi' worsted huggers[5] on, and a jacket o' striped mankey, should hae sae far improved her condition within the year as to be a sonsie gudewife, double

[1] *Bauchles*—old shoes, used as slippers. [2] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 292.

[3] Innerleithen, a village on the Tweed, is the supposed locality of Scott's *St Ronan's Well*. Here athletic games used to be celebrated, and George Scougal was generally one of the champions.

[4] *Fernytickled*—freckled. [5] *Huggers*—stockings without feet.

the size she used to be—her wee bit prim rosy mouth, ance sae like a bud that refused to open out even in the sunshine, noo aye wide open as if wishing to catch flees—and her voice, formerly sae laigh and lown, now loud and fierce as ony ither wife and mither's, scaulding the servant lass, the dowg, or a tramper.[1]

North. True—James—as Wordsworth says,

> "Such ebb and flow must ever be,
> Then wherefore should we mourn?"

Shepherd. As Wordsworth says—whroo!—Nae occasion for quoting onybody but oursels. We twa ken as muckle—and mair too, o' human nature, in its various phawses, than a' the Pond Poets pitten thegither. O man! Mr North, but my heart has often and often amaist dee'd within me, to think that a' we love and long for, pine to possess, and burn to enjoy—a' that passion maddens for on the midnicht pillow, in the desert day-dream—a' that the yearning sowl would fain expand itself to embrace within the rainbow circle o' its holiest and maist heavenly affections—a' that speeritualeezes our human nature, till our very dust-formed bodies seem o' the essence o' licht, or flowers, or music, something no terrestrial, but akin to the elements o' our native regions on the blue cloudless lift——

North. You touch a chord, James—You do indeed—you touch a chord——

Shepherd. Should a' be delusion—a glamour flung ower us by a celestial but deceitful spirit—felt and seen, as soon as it is broken and dissolved, to have been a fiction, a falsehood, a lie—a soft, sweet, bright, balmy, triumphant and glorious lie, in place of which nature offers us in mockery, during a' the rest o' our lives, the puir, paltry, pitiful, faded, fushionless, cauldrifed, and chittering substitute—Truth. O, sir! waes me, that by stripping a' creation, fauld after fauld, o' gay, glitterin, gorgeous and glorious apparellin, you are sure at last to come to the hard naked Truth——

North. Hamlet has it, James—— "a foul congregation of vapours"—

Shepherd. Or say rather, like a body carelessly or purposely pressin a full-blawn or budding rose atween his finger and his

[1] *Tramper*—wandering beggar.

thoomb, scaling leaf after leaf, till what hae you in your hand at last but the bare heart o' the flower, and you look doun amang your feet in vain for the scattered and dissipated bloom that a moment afore thrust its bold beauty into the eyes of the sun, and seemed o' its ain single self to be scenting the haill wilderness, then sweet wi' its grassy braes, as if the heavens had hung over mountains o' bloomin heather steeped in morning dew evaporating in mist-wreaths exhaled from earth to heaven in morning sacrifice!

North. And Tibbie has twins!

Shepherd. 'Deed has she, sir. Her poetry is now prose.

North. Gone all the light lyrical measures! all the sweet pauses transposed. The numerous verse of her virgin being shorn of all its rhymes so musical—a thousand tunes, each in its specific sweetness murmuring of a separate soul, blended indistinguishably into one monotony—and marriage, marriage, marriage is the deadening word!

Shepherd. That's treason, sir—treason against natur. Is the young lintie, I would ask, flutterin amang the broom, or balancin itsel in sportive happiness on ane o' the yellow jewels, half sae bonny as the same lintie sittin in its nest within a briar-bush, wi' its head lying sae meek and lovingly on the rim o' the moss, and a' its breast yearning wi' the still deep instinctive bliss o' maternal affection—or fleeing ten times in a minute frae briar-bush to bracken-brae, and frae bracken-brae to briar-bush, wi' insecks, and worms, and caterpillars, and speeders, in her neb, to satisfy the hunger o' a nest a' agape wi' yellow-throated young anes, and then settlin hersel doun again, as saftly as if she were naething but feathers, aboon her brood in that cozy bield, although but a bit silly burdie, happy as ony angel in the heaven o' heavens?

North. A sweet image, James; an image that beams the light of Poetry on the Prose-ground of human life! But, alas! that thin golden ring lays a heavy weight on the hand that wears it—The finger it seriously and somewhat sadly decks, never again, with so lightsome touch, braids the hair above the fair forehead,—the gay, gladsome, tripping, dancing, and singing maiden soon changes into the staid, calm, douce, almost melancholy matron, whose tears are then sincerer than her smiles—with whom Joy seems but a transient visitor,—Grief a constant guest.

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Shepherd. And this warld, ye ken, sir, and nane kens better, was made for Grief as weel as for Joy. Grief and Joy, unlike as they appear in face and figure, are nevertheless sisters,—and by fate and destiny their verra lives depend on ane and the same eternal law. Were Grief banished frae this life, Joy would soon dwine awa into the resemblance o' her departed Soror—ay, her face would soon be whiter and mair woe-begone, and they would soon be buried, side by side, in ae grave.[1]

North. Shake hands, my dear James. I am in bad spirits to-night, and love to listen to your benign philosophy.

Shepherd. I hae nae philosophy, my dear Mr North; but I howp I hae some religion. If I had not, the banes o' my father and my mother would not lie at rest in Yarrow kirk-yard. Philosophy, I hae nae doubt, is an excellent, a capital thing,—and I'm sure Poetry is sae,—but the ane is but the moon, which, bricht and bonny though she be, is often sairly benichted, and at the best shines by a reflected licht,—the ither is like the stars—no useless in their beauty—God forbid I ever should think sic a stupid thocht—but still, after a', no just sae usefu' perhaps, in the ordinar sense o' utility, as they are pleasant and delichtfu' to the shepherd on the hills; but the last, that is, Religion, she, sir, is like the sun, that gladdens heaven and earth, gars a' things grow, baith for the profit and the pleasure o' man, and convinces us, alike in gloom and glory, that the mortal senses hold a mysterious communion with the immortal soul; that "we are greater than we seem;"—may I be pardoned for even venturing to say, even *here*—and why not—that "the things which are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal."

North. You may say it, James, without reproach *here*—over the social board—*there*, by yourself in the wilderness—*anywhere*, by day or by night, on the world of green earth or foamy waters, on the steadfast brae or reeling deck, in calm or in storm, in joy or in sorrow, in life and in death. Shame on the coward heart that fears to utter what itself prompts! Shame on the coward ear that fears to hear what the heart dictates, in any time or any place, where the mood is blameless,—for mirth is still in sympathy with melancholy, and what, oh! what thoughts profound circle round the wine-cup, when it flows to the memory of one beloved of yore,—one

[1] This sentiment is highly Socratic. See the *Phædo* of Plato, where Socrates moralises on Pain and Pleasure as springing from one root.

who left us in the sunshine of youth, and seems to reappear like a veiled shadow across the light of the festal fire—and then in a moment away into oblivion!

Shepherd. Then you see, sir, the place o' the bonny young distractin and deceitfu' creatures—for, wi' a' their innocence—a favourite word wi' you, sir—they *are* deceitfu'—their places, I say, are supplied by anither flock o' flowers—just like annuals after annuals—as fair and as fragrant as theirsels—and thus, amid the perpetual decay and the perpetual renovation, there is naething worth weeping for—except, indeed, when twa silly poets like us,—and ye are a poet, sir, though ye dinna write verses,—forgather ower a brodd and a bowl, and gie vent, the ane or the ither o' us, it's the turning o' a straw which, to mournfu' heart-sinkings that maun hae an inkling o' pleasure in them, or else they would be at ance repressed—and seek in a sort o' diseased or distemper'd wilfulness, just as you hae been doing the noo, to look on the world in a licht that it was never intended we should look on it, and to people it wi' sorrowfu' spectres, instead o' various kinds o' gude flesh-and-blood folk, a' gude in their degree, in their place, and in their time,—and if that be true, isna a' moping contrar to richt reason, and them that's Penserosos for the maist pairt—Sumphs?

North. "Melancholy and gentlemanlike," you know, James.

Shepherd. It's a wicked ack, sir, in a warld like ours, to sham melancholy; and if a man canna contrive, by ony other means, to look like a gentleman, he had far better keep on lookin like a bagman. Besides being wicked, it's dangerous; for by pretending to be melancholy, in desperation o' being thought a gentleman by ony other mair natural contrivances and endowments, a man comes to get himsel universally despised—contempt kills credit—then follows bankruptcy—and the upshot o' the whole is suicide—jail—or America.

North. But to be rational, and as far as possible from the poetical and the pathetic, I often shudder, James, in solitude, to think of the change, generally slow but often sudden, from the happiness of maidenhood, to the misery of the wife, especially in many of the classes of the lower orders of society. I use advisedly the words—happiness and misery. James, the whole world groans.—I hear it groaning—though no Fine-Ear to the doleful.

Shepherd. There's ower muckle truth in what you say, Mr

North—and were we to think too intently on the dark side o' the picture, or rather on the mony great big black blotches disfigurin the brichtest pairts o' the fairest side o' the married life o' the puir, and ignorant, and depraved, weel might we shut them in despair, and weep for the maist o' woman born! Meesery never comes to a head but in marriage. Yet, oh! how different might it be, without supposing human natur to be altogether changed, but only what it was intended to be, in spite o' original sin and corruption!

North. How many hundreds of thousands of harsh husbands—nay, cruel—savage—fierce—drunken—furious—insane—murderous! What horrid oaths heard at the humblę ingle—and, worse than oaths, blows and shrieks—and the pregnant mother of terrified children, all crouching in a corner, on her knees beseeching the demoniacal homicide not to kick to death the babe yet unborn—for its sake to remember the days of their courtship—and——

Shepherd. Whisht—whisht—whisht!

North. Drunkenness is the cause of nine-tenths of the grief and guilt that aggravate the inevitable distresses of the poor. Dry up that horrid thirst, and the hearts of the wretched would sing aloud for joy. In their sober senses, it seldom happens that men, in a Christian country, are such savages. But all cursed passions latent in the heart, and, seemingly at least, dead, or non-existent, while that heart beats healthily in sober industry, leap up fierce and full-grown in the power of drunkenness, making the man at once a maniac, or rather at once converting him into a fiend.

Shepherd. There's nae cure for that but edication—edicatin o' the people—clear the head and you strengthen the heart—gie thoughts, and feelings follow—I agree wi' Socrates in thinking a' vice ignorance, and a' virtue knowledge, takin a' the four words in the highest sense o' which they are cawpable. Then they are baith *επεα πτεροεντα και φωνᾶντα συνετοῖσι.*[1]

North. Yet I sometimes feel myself almost compelled to agree with the present Archbishop of Canterbury,[2] that there is something necessarily and essentially immoral and irreligious in the cultivation of the intellect——

Shepherd. Na—na—na;—that can never be——

North. His lordship means—apart from—divorced from the

[1] Winged words, and full of significance to the intelligent.

[2] Dr Howley: he died in 1848.

cultivation of those feelings and principles—those great natural instincts—by which man is a moral and religious being. The tendency of intellect not only left to itself, but instructed solely in its own knowledge, is averse, his lordship holds, from the contemplation and the love of more holy and higher things—and——

Shepherd. Ay, there he's richt. I perfectly agree wi' his lordship there—and I wish he kent it—for aiblins I'm better acquainted, practically acquainted, I mean, that ony Archbishop's likely to be—nae disparagement to the Episcopawlian church—wi' the virtues and vices, the sins, sorrows, and sufferings, the noble thochts, and feelips, and acks, the every-day wark-life, the Sabbath-day rest-life, o' the Puir! The first often painfu', laborious, nay, slavish, and wi' but ordinar satisfactions belongin to our lower natur; the last, in Scotland at least, pleasant, cawm, and elevated in blissfu' release, up to a mood that, alike in the auld grey-headit grandfaither, and his bit bonny wee oe walking haun in haun wi' him to the kirk, does indeed deserve the name o' religion, if sic a thing as religion be onywhere to be fund atween heaven and earth.

North. You speak like yourself, my dear James. In their present zeal for intellectual education, many good men forget——

Shepherd. Then they should be reminded, that a' the knowledge which the puir—I needna explain the sense in which I use the word puir—can ever acquire in schools, or mechanical institutions, can be nae mair than subsidiary to a far higher knowledge; and that if *that* be negleckit, or undervalued, a' that they can ever learn will either be useless or pernicious—for isna the chief end o' man "to fear God and keep his commandments"?

North. I believe, my admirable friend, that you have said, in a few plain and simple, but, allow me to add, beautiful and noble words—all that can possibly be said on this all-important subject. Put round the jug, James.

Shepherd. Then, sir, what may be the case in England, I dinna weel ken—for I never was onywhere in England except at the Lakes on a veesit to your freen the Professor,[1] then only the author o' the *Isle o' Pawms*, and *The City o' the Plague;* and the folk there seemed no unlike the folk in our ain kintra,

[1] Professor Wilson, whose country seat was Elleray on the banks of Windermere.

only they thocht ower little o' leadin in corn on dry Sundays in rainy weather,—but in Scotland, the people are not ignorant —it is lang since they were ignorant,—and to return to what we was sayin about unhappy marriages, believe me, sir, when I say, that maist marriages—by far the maist—are happy—for a warld o' new thochts, and new feelings, is unfaulded within wife's and husband's heart; and though there will be sour or dour looks at a time—some flytin[1]—and even wilfu' meesery—these are but the sughin wunds and the drivin cluds,—and the Lift[2] o' Life, gin I may use the expression, is, generally speaking, like our ain dear, sweet, blue Scottish sky, a' the year through, spring, simmer, awtumn, and wunter, pleasant baith to the ee and to the sowl,—for God reigns day and nicht, aboon and below, alike in dead creation, and in us his creatures, wha, if they serve him, shall never dee, but have immortal life.

North. Perhaps, then, James, you think that in Scotland, what we have chiefly to do is to keep education right—to——

Shepherd. Nearly sae. At a' yevents, nane but ignorant sumphs wad apply to the people o' Scotland that vile nonsense about the "March o' Intellect," and so forth,—for our ancestors hae for generations been as wise in the best o' a' wisdom as ourscls[3]—though there has been great improvement in a' the airts, and aiblins the sceeances,—but o' the latter I shanna for I canna speak—and aboon a' things else, there has been wrought by that means a great and a beneficial change in the agricultur o' the kintra.

North. Yet something, I fear, James, may have been lost.

Shepherd. Ay, mony a thing, that, had I my ain way, should leeve[4] for ever. But religion, wi' a' the cauldrife changes in life, and manners, and customs, still strongly survives—and, thanks to Robert Burns—and aiblins ane or twa mair, there is still poetry amang our braes,—and o' nae shepherd on our Scottish hills could it be truly said, in the language o' Wordsworth:—

> "A primrose on the river's brim,
> A yellow primrose was to him,
> And it was nothing more."

[1] *Flytin*—scolding. [2] *Lift*—atmosphere.

[3] And this education—do we not owe it to the admirable working of our parish schools?—a system which certainly ought not to be rashly meddled with by the Legislature. [4] *Leeve*—live.

For as gude a poet as Wordsworth, and in my opinion a better too, has tauld us what he felt frae the sicht o' a Mountain Daisy.

North. There is comfort in that creed, my dear James. I feel as if an oppressive weight were taken from my heart.

Shepherd. Then that's mair than I do—mair than you or onyither man should say, after devoorin half a hunder eisters—and siccan eisters—to say naething o' a tippenny loaf, a quarter o' a pund o' butter—and the better pairt o' twa pots o' porter.

North. James! I have not eat a morsel, or drank a drop, since breakfast.

Shepherd. Then, I've been confusioning you wi' mysel. A' the time that I was sookin up the eisters frae out o' their shells, ilka ane sappier than anither in its shallow pool o' caller saut sea-water, and some o' them takin a stronger sook than ithers to rug them out o' their cradles,—I thocht I saw you, sir, in my mind's ee, and no by my bodily organs, it would appear, doin the same to a nicety, only dashing on mair o' the pepper, and mixing up mustard wi' your vinegar, as if gratifying a fause appeteet.

North. That cursed cholera——

Shepherd. I never, at ony time o' the year, hae recourse to the cruet till after the lang hunder—and in September—after four months' fast frae the creturs—I can easily devoor them by theirsels just in their ain liccor, on till anither fifty—and then, to be sure, just when I am beginning to be a wee stawed,[1] I apply first the pepper to a squad, and then, after a score or twa in that way, some dizzen and a half wi' vinegar, and finish aff, like you, wi' a wheen to the mustard, till the brodd's naething but shells.

North. The cholera has left me so weak, that——

Shepherd. I dinna ken a mair perplexin state o' mind to be in than to be swithering about a farther brodd o' eisters, when you've devoored what at ae moment is felt to be sufficient, and anither moment what is felt to be very insufficient—feelin stawed this moment, and that moment yaup[2] as ever—noo sayin into yoursel that you'll order in the toasted cheese, and then silently swearin that you maun hae anither yokin at the beardies——

North. This last attack, James, has reduced me much—and a few more like it will deprive the world of a man whose poor abilities were ever devoted to her ser——

[1] *Stawed*—surfeited. [2] *Yaup*—hungry.

Shepherd. I agree wi' ye, sir, in a' ye say about the diffeculty o' the dilemma. But during the dubiety and the swither, in comes honest Mr Awmrose, o' his ain accord, wi' the final brodd, and a body feels himsel to have been a great sumph for suspecking ae single moment that he wasna able for his share o' the concluding Centenary o' Noble Inventions. There's really no end in natur to the eatin o' eisters.

North. Really, James, your insensibility, your callousness to my complaints, painfully affects me, and forces me to believe that Friendship, like Love, is but an empty name.

Shepherd. An empty wame![1] It's your ain faut gin it's empty—but you wadna surely be for eatin the very shells? Oh! Mr North, but o' a' the men I ever knew, you are the most distinguished by natural and native coortesy and politeness—by what Cicero calls Urbanity. Tak it—tak it. For I declare, were I to tak it, I never could forgie mysel a' my days. Tak it, sir.—My dear sir, tak it.

North. What do you mean, James?—What the devil *can* you mean?

Shepherd. The last eister—the mainners eister—it's but a wee ane, or it hadna been here. There, sir, I've douked it in an amalgamation o' pepper, vinegar, and mustard, and a wee drap whusky. Open your mouth, and tak it aff the pin to' my fork—that's a gude bairn.

North. I have been very ill, my dear James.

Shepherd. Haud your tongue—nae sic thing. Your cheeks are no half that shrivelled they were last year; and there's a circle o' yeloquent bluid in them baith, as ruddy as Robin's breast. Your lips are no like cherries—but they were aye rather thin and colourless since first I kent you; and when chirted thegither—oh! man, but they have a scornfu', and savage, and cruel expression, that ought seldom to be on a face o' clay. As for your een, there's twenty gude year o' life in their licht yet. But, Lord safe us!—dinna, I beseech you, put on your specks; for when you cock up your chin, and lie back on your chair, and keep fastenin your lowin een upon a body through the glasses, it's mair than mortal man can endure—you look so like the Deevil Incarnate.

North. I am a much-injured man in the estimation of the world, James, for I am gentle as a sleeping child.

[1] *Wame*—stomach.

Shepherd. Come, now—you're wushin me to flatter you—ye're desperate fond, man, o' flattery.

North. I admit—confess—glory that I am so. It is impossible to lay it on too thick. All that an author has to do to secure a favourable notice, short or long, in *Blackwood's Magazine*, is, to call it in the body of his work, or even in a foot-note, "that matchless Miscellany," "that exhaustless fund of all that is entertaining and instructive," "that miracle of Magazines," "that peerless Periodical," "that glory of Scotland," "that wonder of the world," and so forth—while of ourself personally, let him merely say, "Christopher, who with the wisdom of a Socrates unites the wit of an Aristophanes;"—"North, at once the Bacon, the Swift, and the Scott of the age;"—"Christopher, whose universal genius and achievements, while they prove the possibility of the existence of such a character as the Admirable Crichton, at the same time throw that wonderful person for ever into the shade," and let him be the most distinguished dunce extant—even MacDermot himself on Taste and Tragedy—and his brains shall be extolled to the skies, above moon and stars.

Shepherd. What'n an avooal!

North. Why, James, are you so weak as ever to have imagined for a moment that I care a pin's point for truth, in the praise or blame bestowed or inflicted on any mortal creature in my Magazine?

Shepherd. What's that you say?—can I believe my lugs!

North. I have been merely amusing myself for a few years back with the great gawky world. I hate and despise all mankind—and hitherto I have been contented with laughing at them all in my sleeve—pleasing this blockhead only to pain that—holding up John as a great genius, that Tom might the more intensely feel himself to be a dunce. The truth is, James, that I am a misanthrope, and have a liking only for Cockneys.

Shepherd. The chandaleer's gaun to fa' doun on our heads. Eat your words, sir, eat your words, or——

North. You would not have me *lie*, during the only time that, for many years, I have felt a desire to speak the *truth*? The only distinctions I acknowledge are intellectual ones. Moral distinctions there are none—and as for religion—it is all a——

Shepherd (*standing up*). And it's on principles like these —boldly and unblushingly avoe'd here—in Mr Awmrose's paper-parlour, at the conclusion o' the sixth bredd, on the evening o' Monday the 22d o' September, Anno Dominie aughteen hunder and twunty-aught, within twa hours o' midnicht—that you, sir, have been yeditin a Măggăsin that has gone out to the uttermost corners o' the yerth, wherever civilisation or uncivilisation is known, deludin and distrackin men and women folk, till it's impossible for them to ken their right hand frae their left—or whether they're standin on their heels or their heads—or what byeuk ought to be perused, and what byeuk puttin intil the bottom o' pie-dishes, and trunks—or what awthor hissed, or what awthor hurraa'd—or what's flummery and what's philosophy—or what's rant and what's religion—or what's monopoly and what's free tredd—or wha's poets or wha's but Pats—or whether it's best to be drunk, or whether it's best to be sober a' hours o' the day and nicht—or if there should be rich church establishments as in England, or poor kirk ones as in Scotland—or whether the Bishop o' Canterbury, wi' twunty thousan' a-year, is mair like a primitive Christian than the Minister o' Kirkintulloch wi' twa hunder and fifty—or if folk should aye be readin sermons or fishin for sawmon—or if it's best to marry or best to burn —or if the national debt hangs like a millstone round the neck o' the kintra or like a chain o' blae-berries—or if the Millennium be really close at haun—or the present Solar System be calculated to last to a' eternity—or whether the people should be edicated up to the highest pitch o' perfection, or preferably to be all like trotters through the Bog o' Allen—or whether the Government should subsideeze foreign powers, or spend a' its siller on oursels—or whether the Blacks and the Catholics should be emancipawted or no afore the demolition o' Priests and Obis,—or whether—God forgie us baith for the hypothesis—man has a mortal or an immortal sowl—be a Phœnix—or an Eister!

North. Precisely so, James. You have drawn my real character to a hair—and the character, too, of the baleful work over which I have the honour and happiness to preside.

Shepherd. I canna sit here ony langer, and hear a' things, visible and invisible, turned tapsy-turvy and tapsalteerie—I'm aff—I'm aff—ower to the Auld Toon, to tak toddy wi' Christians, and no wi' an Atheist, that would involve the

warld in even-doun Pyrrhonism—and disorder, if he could, the verra coorses o' the seven Planets, and set the central Sun adrift through the sky. Gude-nicht to ye, sir—gude-nicht—Ye are the maist dangerous o' a' reprobates—for your private conduct and character is that o' an angel, but your public that o' a fiend; and the honey o' your domestic practice can be nae antidote to the pushion o' your foreign principles. I'm aff—I'm aff.

(*Enter* Mr Ambrose *with a Howtowdie, and* King Pepin *with Potatoes and Ham.*)

Shepherd (*in continuation*). What brought ye intil the room the noo, Mr Awmrose, wi' a temptation sic as that—nae flesh and bluid can resist? Awa back to the kitchen wi' the savoury sacrifice—or clash doun the Towdie afore the Bagman in the wee closet-room, ayont the wainscot. What'n a bonny, brown, basted, buttery, iley, and dreepin breast o' a roasted Earock! O' a' the smells I ever fan, that is the maist insupportably seducin to the palate. It has gien me the water-brash. Weel, weel, Mr North, since you insist on't, we'll resume the argument after supper.

North. Good-night, James.—Ambrose, deposit the Towdie, and show Mr Hogg down stairs. Lord bless you, James—good-night.

Shepherd (*resuming his seat*). Dinna say anither word, sir. Nae farther apology. I forgie you. Ye wasna serious. Come, be cheerfu'—I'm sune pacified. O man, but ye cut up a fool[1] wi' incredible dexterity! There—a leg and a wing to yoursel—and a leg and a wing to me—then to you the breast—for I ken ye like the breast—and to me the back—and I dinna dislike the back,—and then, How-towdie! "Farewell! a long farewell to all thy fatness." O, sir! but the taties are gran' the year! How ony Christian creature can prefer waxies to mealies, I never could conjecture. Anither spoonfu' or twa o' the gravy. Haud—haud—what a deluge!

North. This, I trust, my dear Shepherd, will be a good season for the poor.

Shepherd. Nae fear o' that, sir. Has she ony eggs? But I forgot—the hens are no layin the noo; they're mootin.[2] Faith, considering ye didna eat mony o' the cisters, your appetect's no amiss, sir. Pray, sir, will ye tell me gin there

[1] *Fool*—fowl. [2] *Mootin*—moulting.

be ony difference atween this new-fangled oriental disease, they ca' the Cholera, and the gude auld-fashion'd Scottish complent, the colic?

North. Mr Ambrose, give Mr Hogg some bread.

Shepherd. Ye needna fash, Mr Awmrose. I tak bread at breakfast, and the afternoons, but never either at denner or sooper—but I'm thinkin a bottle a-piece o' Berwick's or Giles' strong yill 'ill taste geyan weel after the porter. Tak tent, in drawin the cork, that the yill doesna spoot up to the ceilin. Bottled yill's aye up in the stirrups. The moment you pu' out the cork, in wi' your thoomb—and then decant baith bottles into the dolphin.

North. Above an average crop, I suppose, James.

Shepherd. Do you contribute to it, sir?

North. To what?

Shepherd. Mr Blackwood's New Agricultural Journal, to be sure. There's a gran' openin the noo for sic a wark—and he's gotten a capital Editor. The subject is endless as the earth itsel and its productions.

North. I am a Monogamist.

Shepherd. And what's that—may I ask?

North. A man with one wife. Her name is—Maga.[1]

Shepherd. Ay, ye do richt in stickin till her. Were the ane o' ye to die, the tither wad sune follow. You are lovely in your lives, and in your deaths you will not be divided.

North. She sometimes has her sulks and her tantrums; but, in spite of them all, our wedded life has been all one honeymoon.

Shepherd. And then what a breedy body! A new birth every month—and sometimes twuns. Is she never to hae dune?

North. Dropping all figure or metaphor,—What do you think of Maga, the Matron?

Shepherd. She shud hae mair leeteratur—mair creetishism—mair accounts o' books o' voyages and travels—mair owerhaulin o' the press—mair philosophic estimates o' the genius o' the age, in Poetry, Eloquence, Paintin, Music, the Playhouse, and the rest o' the Fine Arts—mair topography and antiquities—aiblins, mair divinity;—and I hear folk that canna read Latin and Greek cryin out for the Classics, as they

[1] *Blackwood's Magazine.*

ca' them,—Popular Essays on the Classics, from Homer down to modern Romaics inclusive—and I can weel believe that the Greeks and Romans were gran' writers, for they were gran' fechters, and the twa aye gang thegither—the Lyre and the Lance, the Pen and the Swurd. Noo, tell me, sir, and tell me truly, was Theocrates really as gude a pastoral poet as me, or Robert Burns, or Allan Ramsay, or Allan Cunningham?

North. He was, James, your equal in truth, simplicity, nature; more than your equal in an occasional rustic grace without a name,—superior far in the power and magic of a language light as air, dense as clouds, cheerful as the dædal earth, magnificent as the much-and-many-sounding sea;—but he was, in variety of feelings and fancies, in depth and force of passion, in creation of character, in profusion of imagery, in invention of incident, far inferior to You Glorious Four.[1] He was indeed.

Shepherd. I'm glad to hear that, sir,—for the honour o' auld Scotland. She too, then, is an Arcawdia.

North. Let Glencorse Burn, murmuring from Habbie's Howe through Compensation Pond, down into the Esk, and then to the sea,—let the Ayr and Doune, cheering Coila with immortal music,—let the dewy, no more the dowie holms of Yarrow,—let the Nith, from Closeburn to Criffel, attest the truth[2]—let the——

Shepherd. O man! but the inside o' the back is sappy—sappy. What wi' your sauce and its ain gravy, this is the maist delicious Towdie that ever foraged afore the fanners. Noo for the yill. I fancy there's nae sin in dichtin ane's gab wi' the tablecloth,—for I've forgotten my pocket-hankerchief in my big-coat.

North. Is it not singular, James, that, though we two have each our own peculiar and characteristic style of eating, we have finished equal quantities in equal times?

Shepherd. I was dune lang afore you, sir—and no to hurry

[1] The title of Allan Ramsay to rank as one of any "glorious" four may well be doubted. His nature was decidedly prosaic, if not essentially vulgar.

[2] Habbie's Howe, among the Pentland Hills near Edinburgh, has obtained celebrity as the scene of Ramsay's *Gentle Shepherd*; but localities and traditions are in favour of Newhall, about five miles distant, on the North Esk. Burns glorified the Ayr and Doune. The holms of Yarrow were the birthplace of the muse of Hogg; and the flowings of the Nith found an echo in the songs of Cunningham.

you, have been sookin awa, for ten minutes, in amang the trellis-wark o' the spine, lang after the banes o' the back were as dry as horn.

North. And I, for a quarter of an hour, have been dallying with the merrythought.

Shepherd. I aye kent, though we sometimes seem to differ in opinion, that we are congenial speerits. For gudesake, dinna drain the dolphin!

North. A mixture of Giles's and Berwick — nectar worthy an ambrosial feast!

Shepherd. It gars my een water, and my lugs crack. Noo for the toasted cheese.

(*Enter* TAFFY *with two Welsh rabbits, and exit.*)

Shepherd (*looking after him*). What droich[1] o' a new cretur's that?

North. A Welshman. Desirous of seeing the world, he worked his passage from Penrhyn to Liverpool, on board a slater — thence played the part of shoeblack in a steamer to Greenock and Glasgow—from Port-Dundas in the West country to Port-Hopetoun in the East, he ballad-sang himself in an unknown tongue by one of the canal coal-boats—and Mr Ambrose, who has a fine natural *coup d'œil*, picked him up one morning in the Vegetable Market, munching a carrot, without hat, shoes, or stockings—but a lively, active, and intelligent-looking lad as you can see—and in less than a month he was the best waiter in Edinburgh.

Shepherd. What's the name o' the cretur?

North. On account of a slight limp in his left leg, which promotes rather than impedes his activity, we call him — Sir David Gam.

Shepherd. I hae some thochts o' keepin a flunkey——

North. Don't, James. A lassie's far better in every respect.

Shepherd. But then, sir, a flunkey in the Forest livery wad look sae genteel and fashionable——

North. What is the Forest livery?

Shepherd. Bricht bottle-green, sir, lined and turned up at the tails, lappelles, cuffs, and collar, wi' oker, barred on the breast, when the single-breasted coat's buttoned, wi' zigzag stripes o' twisted gold-lace—and the buttons o' yellow brass, few in number, but about as big's a tea-cup cheena saucer. That's the Forest livery, sir.

[1] *Droich*—dwarf.

North. The nether integuments?

Shepherd. What? the breeks? There's nae maitter about the breeks—but, generally speakin, nankeens, wi' blue thread stockings and pumps, in summer—and in winter, corduroys, wi' grey rig-and-fur worsteds, and quarter boots.

North. I do not believe Sir David would leave Picardy for any place in the world; besides, James, it would not be handsome to tempt him away from Mr Ambrose, by the offer of high wages——

Shepherd. High wages, indeed! The deevil a wage he should hae frae me. A shute o' livery—and anither o' wark claes—a ride in the gig thrice a-week—that's to say, in the box ahint—and on the hill the ither three days wi' the grews—as muckle as he could eat and drink o' meat, vegetables, and milkness, cheese included—plenty o' fun in the kitchen—and what mair could the heart o' the bit young Auncient Briton desire?

North. I have no doubt that Sir David is laying up golden store, with a view to purchase an estate in his native country. Like us Scotchmen, the Welsh are a proud and provident race. He is a boy of birth.

Shepherd. There noo, Mr North—there's the whole Principawlity o' Wales lying untouched for articles in the Magazine. What for is't ca'd the Principawlity? What like is't by our ain Highlands? Is the language the same's the Erse? What mean ye by the Welch Triads? Did Cadwaller, Urien, Lewellen, Modred, and Hoel, flourish afore or after Ossian? And aboon a', what is or can be in a' this world—what, for mercy's sake, tell me, can be—the meanin o' the Cymrodion at Estoffud?

North. All in good time, James—but I have hitherto been very unlucky about Wales. The only literary Welshman of great abilities and erudition I know, has been too busily occupied with the important functions of his own useful and honourable profession,[1] to become a contributor to Maga—and these idle dogs of Oxonians and Cantabs——

Shepherd. What? Mr Sheward and Mr Buller?[2]

[1] The Rev. John Williams, afterwards Archdeacon of Cardigan, author of *Homerus* and other learned works, was for many years the zealous and efficient Rector of the Edinburgh Academy. He retired from that Institution in 1847.

[2] Charactors frequently introduced in Professor Wilson's writings—embodiments, I believe, of his old Oxford reminiscences.

North. No — no — no. Batches of boys from Oxford and Cambridge, about to become Bachelors of Arts, settle down in Bangor and Llanwryst, and other pretty Welsh villages, getting themselves crammed by tutors with Greek and cube roots for wranglers, and senior optimes, and first classmen, and over and over again, during the last seven years, have the vagabonds promised to send me lots of leading articles——

Shepherd. Never trust till a contributor fourty miles aff frae Embro'. Besides, young lawds like them, though clever chiels, nae doubt, carryin aff at college gold medals for Greek and Latin epigrams, and English poems on the Druids, and so on, canna write articles gude for muckle — they canna indeed—and for years to come should just confine themsels to Allbums.

NOTE.—Here terminates Professor Wilson's contribution to this number of the Noctes.

XVIII.

(DECEMBER 1828.)

Scene I.—The Octagon.—Time—Ten.

NORTH, SHEPHERD, TICKLER.

North. Thank heaven! my dear Shepherd, Winter is come again, and Edinburgh is beginning once more to look like herself, like her name and her nature, with rain, mist, sleet, haur, hail, snow I hope, wind, storm—would that we could but add a little thunder and lightning—The Queen of the North.

Shepherd. Hoo could you, sir, wi' a' your time at your ain command, keep in and about Embro' frae May to December? The city, for three months in the dead o' simmer, is like a tomb.

Tickler (*in a whisper to the Shepherd*). The widow—James —the widow.

Shepherd (*aloud*). The weedow—sir—the weedow! Couldna he hae brocht her out wi' him to the Forest? At their time o' life, surely scandal wad hae held her tongue.

Tickler. Scandal never holds her tongue, James. She drops her poison upon the dew on the virgin's untimely grave—her breath will not let the grey hairs rest in the mould——

Shepherd. Then, Mr North, marry her at ance, and bring her out in Spring, that you may pass the hinney-moon on the sunny braes o' Mount Benger.

North. Why, James, the moment I begin to press matters, she takes out her pocket-handkerchief—and through sighs and sobs, recurs to the old topic—that twenty thousand times told t... —the dear old General.

Shepherd. Deevil keep the dear old General! Hasna the

man been dead these twunty years? And if he had been leevin, wouldna he been aulder than yoursel, and far mair infirm? You're no in the least infirm, sir.

North. Ah, James! that's all you know. My infirmities are increasing with years——

Shepherd. Wad you be sae unreasonable as to expect them to decrease with years? Are her infirmities——

North. Hush—she has no infirmities.

Shepherd. Nae infirmities! Then she's no worth a brass button. But let me ask you ae interrogatory.—Hae ye ever put the question? Answer me that, sir.

North. Why, James, I cannot say that I ever have——

Shepherd. What! and you expeck that *she* wull put the question to *you?* That would indeed be puttin the cart before the horse. If the women were to ask the men, there wad be nae leevin in this warld. Yet, let me tell you, Mr North, that it's a shamefu' thing to keep playin in the way you hae been doin for these ten years past on a young woman's feelings——

Tickler. Ha—ha—ha—James!—A young woman! Why, she's sixty, if she's an hour.

North. You lie.

Shepherd. That's a douss[1] on the chops, Mr Tickler. That's made you as red in the face as a bubbly-jock, sir. O the power o' ae wee bit single monosyllabic syllable o' a word to awauken a' the safter and a' the fiercer passions! Dinna keep bitin your thoomb, Mr Tickler, like an Itawlian. Make an apology to Mr North——

North. I will accept of no apology. The man who calls a woman old deserves death.

Shepherd. Did you call her auld, Mr Tickler?

Tickler. To you, sir, I will condescend to reply. I did not. I merely said she was sixty if she was an hour.

Shepherd. In the first place, dinna "Sir" me—for it's not only ill bred, but it's stupit. In the second place, dinna talk o' "condescendin" to reply to me—for that's language I'll no thole even frae the King on the throne, and I'm sure the King on the throne wadna make use o't. In the third place, to ca' a woman saxty, and then maintoen that ye didna ca' her auld, is naething short o' a sophism. And, in the fourth place, you shudna hae accompanied your remark wi' a

[1] *Douss*—a blow, a stroke.

loud haw—haw—haw,—for on a tender topic a guffaw's an aggravation—and marryin a widow, let her age be what it wull, is a tender topic, depend on't—sae that on a calm and dispassionate view o' a' the circumstances o' the case, there can be nae dout that you maun mak an apology; or, if you do not, I leave the room, and there is an end of the Noctes Ambrosianæ.

North. An end of the Noctes Ambrosianæ!

Tickler. An end of the Noctes Ambrosianæ!

Shepherd. An end of the Noctes Ambrosianæ.

Omnes. An end of the Noctes Ambrosianæ!!!

North. Rather than that should happen I will make a thousand apologies——

Tickler. And I ten thousand——

Shepherd. That's behavin like men and Christians. Embrace—embrace. [North *and* Tickler *embrace.*

North. Where were we, James?

Shepherd. I was abusin Embro' in simmer.

North. Why?

Shepherd. Whey?—a' the lums[1] smokeless! No ae[2] jack turnin a piece o' roastin beef afore ae fire in ony ae kitchen in a' the New Toon! Streets and squares a' grass-grown, sae that they micht be mawn! Shops like bee-hives that hae dee'd in wunter! Coaches settin aff for Stirlin, and Perth, and Glasgow, and no ae passenger either inside or out—only the driver keepin up his heart wi' flourishing his whup, and the guard, sittin in perfect solitude, playin an eerie spring on his bugle-horn! The shut-up playhouse a' covered ower wi' bills that seem to speak o' plays acted in an antediluvian world! Here, perhaps, a leevin cretur, like an emage, staunin at the mouth o' a close, or hirplin[3] alang, like the last relic o' the plague. And oh! but the stane-statue o' the late Lord Melville,[4] staunin a' by himsel up in the silent air, a hunder and fifty feet high, has then a ghastly seeming in the sky, like some giant condemned to perpetual imprisonment on his pedestal, and mournin ower the desolation of the city that in life he loved so well, unheeded and unhonoured for a season

[1] *Lums*—chimneys. [2] *No ae*—not one.

[3] "Hobbling" comes as near *hirpling* as the less expressive character of the English language admits of.

[4] Henry Dundas, the first Lord Melville, was born in 1740, and died in 1811. For many reasons his influence in Scotland was supreme; and his grateful countrymen erected, in 1821, a splendid monument to his memory in St Andrew Square, Edinburgh.

in the great metropolitan heart o' the country which he ance rejoiced to enrich and beautify, telling and teaching her how to hold up her head bauldly among the nations, and like a true patriot as he was, home and abroad caring for the greatest—and the least of all her sons!

North. He was the greatest statesman ever Scotland produced, James; nor is she ungrateful, for the mutterings of Whig malice have died away like so much croaking in the pouchy throats of drought-dried toads, and the cheerful singing and whistling of Industry all over the beautifully cultivated Land, are the hymns perpetually exhaled to heaven along with the morning dews, in praise and commemoration of the Patriots who loved the sacred soil in which their bones lie buried.

Shepherd. That's weel said, sir. Let there be but a body o' Truth, and nae fear but imagery will crood around it, just like shadows and sunbeams cast frae the blue sky, the white clouds, and the green trees, round about the body o' some fair maid,—that is, some bonny Scotch lassie, bathin in a stream as pure as her ain thochts.

Tickler. There again, James!

Shepherd. But to return to the near approach o' wunter. Mankind hae again putten on worsted stockins, and flannen drawers—white jeans and yellow nankeen troosers hae disappeared—dooble soles hae gotten a secure footen ower pumps—big-coats wi' fur, and mantles wi' miniver, gie an agreeable rouchness to the picturesque stream o' life eddyin alang the channel o' the streets—gloves and mittens are sae general that a red hairy haun looks rather singular—every third body ye meet, for fear o' a sudden blash, carries an umbrella—a' folk shave noo wi' het water—coal-carts are emptyin theirsels into ilka area—caddies at the corners o' streets and drivers on coach-boxes are seen warmin themsels by blawin on their fingers, or whuskin themsels wi' their open nieves across the shouthers—skates glitter at shop-wundows prophetic o' frost—Mr Phin[1] may tak in his rod noo, for nae mair thocht o' anglin till spring,—and wi' spring hersel, as wi' ither o' our best and bonniest freens, it may be said, out o' sicht out o' mind,—you see heaps o' bears hung out for sale—horses are a' hairier o' the hide—the bit toon bantam craws nane, and at breakfast you maun tak tent no to pree an egg afore smellin

[1] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 348.

at it,—you meet hares carryin about in a' quarters—and ggem-keepers proceedin out into the kintra wi' strings o' grews,—sparrows sit silent and smoky wi' ruffled feathers waiting for crumbs on the ballustrawds—loud is the cacklin in the fowl-market o' Christmas geese that come a month at least afore the day, just like thae Annuals the Forget-me-Nots, Amulets, Keepsakes, Beejoos, Gems, Anniversaries, Souvenirs, Friendship's Offerings, and Wunter-Wreaths——

Tickler. Stop, James—stop. Such an accumulation of imagery absolutely confounds—perplexes——

Shepherd. Folk o' nae fancy. Then for womankind——

Tickler. Oh! James, James! I knew you would not long keep off that theme——

Shepherd. Oh, ye pawkie auld carle! What ither theme in a' this wide weary warld is worth ae single thocht or feelin in the poet's heart—ae single line frae the poet's pen—ae single——

North. Song from the Shepherd's lyre—of which, as of the Teian Bard's of old, it may be said

Ἁ βαρβιτος δε χορδαις
Ερωτα μουνον ηχει.[1]

Do, my dear James, give us John Nicholson's daughter.

Shepherd. Wait a wee. The womankind, I say, sirs, never looks sae bonny as in wunter, excepp indeed it may be in spring——

Tickler. Or summer, or autumn, James——

Shepherd. Haud your tongue. You auld bachelors ken naething o' womankind—and hoo should ye, when they treat you wi' but ae feelin, that o' derision? Oh, sirs! but the dear creturs do look weel in muffs—whether they haud them, wi' their invisible hauns clasped thegither in their beauty within the cozy silk linin, close prest to their innicent waists, just aneath the glad beatins o' their first-love-touched hearts——

Tickler. There again, James!

Shepherd. Or haud them hingin frae their extended richt arms, leavin a' the feegur visible, that seems taller and slimmer as the removed muff reveals the clasps o' the pelisse a' the way doun frae neck till feet!

North. Look at Tickler—James—how he moves about in his chair. His restlessness——

[1] The harp with its strings sounds only love.

Shepherd. Is no unnatural. Then, sir, is there, in a' the beautifu' and silent unfauldins o' natur amang plants and flowers, onything sae beautifu' as the white, smooth, saft chafts o' a bit smilin maiden o' saxteen, aughteen, or twunty, blossomin out, like some bonny bud o' snaw-white satin frae a coverin o' rough leaves,—blossomin out, sirs, frae the edge o' the fur-tippet, that haply a lover's happy haun had delicately hung ower her gracefu' shouthers—oh the dear delightfu' little Laplander!

Tickler. For a married man, James, you really describe——

North. Whisht!

Shepherd. I wush you only heard the way the bonny croodin-doos[1] keep murmurin their jeists[2] to ane anither, as soon as a nest o' them gets rid o' an auld bacheleer on Princes Street.

Tickler. Gets rid o' an auld bachelor!

Shepherd. Booin and scrapin to them after the formal and stately fashion o' the auld school o' politeness, and thinkin himsel the very pink o' coortesy, wi' a gold-headed cane aiblins, nae less, in his haun, and buckles on's shoon—for buckles are no quite out yet a'thegither—a frill like a fan at the shirt-neck o' him—and, wad the warld believe't, knee-brecks!—then they titter—and then they lauch—and then, as musical as if they were singin in pairts, the bonny, bloomin, innicent wicked creturs break out into—I maunna say, o' sic rosy lips, and sic snawy breasts, a guffaw[3]—but a guffay, sirs, a guffay—for that's the feminine o' guffaw——

North. Tickler, we really must not allow ourselves to be insulted in this style any longer——

Shepherd. And then awa they trip, sirs, flingin an antelope's or gazelle's ee ower their shouther, diverted beyond measure to see their antique beau continuing at a distance to cut capers in his pride—till a' at ance they see a comet in the sky—a young offisher o' dragoons, wi' his helmet a' in a low wi' a flicker o' red feathers—and as he "turns and winds his fiery Pegassus," they are a' mute as death—yet every face at the same time eloquent wi' mantling smiles, and wi' blushes that break through and around the blue heavens of their een, like crimson clouds to sudden sunlight burning beautiful for a moment, and then melting away like a thocht or a dream!

[1] *Croodin-doos*—cooing doves. [2] *Jeists*—jests. [3] *Guffaw*—a broad laugh.

North. Why, my dear James, it does one's heart good even to be ridiculed in the language of Poetry. Does it not, Tickler?

Tickler. James, your health, my dear fellow.

Shepherd. I never ridicule onybody, sirs, that's no fit to bear it. But there's some sense and some satisfaction in makin a fule o' them, that, when the fiend's in them, can mak fules o' a' body, like North and Tickler.

North. You would cackle, my dear James, were I to tell you how the laugh went against me, t'other day on the Calton Hill.

Shepherd. The laugh went against you, sir? That forebodes some evil to the State o' Denmark.

North. I had chanced to take a stroll, James, round the Calton Hill, and feeling my toe rather twitchy, I sat down on a bench immediately under Nelson's Monument, and having that clever paper the *Observer* of the day in my pocket, I began to glance over its columns, when my attention was suddenly attracted to a confused noise of footsteps, whisperings, titterings, and absolutely guffaws, James, circling round the base of that ingenious model of a somewhat clumsy churn, Nelson's Monument. Looking through my specks—lo! a multitude of all sexes—more especially the female—kept congregating round me, some with a stare, others with a simper, some with a full open-mouthed laugh, and others with a half-shut-eye leer, which latter mode of expressing her feelings, is, in a woman, to me peculiarly loathsome, while ever and anon I heard one voice saying, "He is really a decent man;" another, "He has been a fine fellow in his day, I warrant;" a third, "Come awa, Meg, he's ower auld for my money;" and a fourth, "He has cruel grey-green een, and looks like a man that would murder his wife."

Shepherd. That was gutting fish afore you catch them—But what was the meanin o' a' this, sir?

North. Why, James, some infernal ninny, it seems, had advertised in the Edinburgh newspapers for a wife with a hundred a-year, and informed the female public that he would be seen sitting for inspection——

Tickler. In the character of opening article in the *Edinburgh Review*——

North. From the hours of one and two in the afternoon, on

the identical bench, James, on which, under the influence of a malignant star, I had brought myself to anchor.

Shepherd. Haw! haw! haw! That beats cock-fechtin—So then Christopher North sat publicly on a bench commandin a view o' the haill city o' Embro', as an adverteeser for a wife wi' a moderate income—and you canna ca' a hunder a-year immoderate, though it's comfortable—and was unconsciously undergoin an inspection as scrutineezin to the ee o' fancy and imagination, as a recruit by the surgeon afore he's alloo'd to join the regiment. Haw—haw—haw!

North. I knew nothing at the time, James, of the infernal ninny and his advertisement——

Shepherd. Sae you continued sittin and glowerin at the crood through your specks?

North. I did, James. What else could I do? The semicircle "sharpening its mooned horns," closed in upon me, hemming and hemming me quite up to the precipice in my rear—the front rank of the allied powers being composed, as you may suppose, of women——

Shepherd. And a pretty pack they wad be — fishwives, female caudies, blue-stockins, toon's-offisher's widows, washerwomen, she-waiters, girrzies, auld maids wi' bairds, and young limmers wi' green parasols and five flounces to their forenoon gowns——

North. I so lost my head, James, and all power of discrimination, that the whole assemblage seemed to me like a great daub of a picture looked at by a connoisseur with a sick stomach, and suddenly about to faint in an exhibition.

Shepherd. You hae reason to be thankfu' that they didna tear you into pieces.

North. At last up I got, and attempted to make a speech, but I felt as if I had no tongue.

Shepherd. That was a judgment on you, sir, for bein' sae fond o' talkin——

North. Instinctively brandishing my crutch, I attacked the centre of the circle, which immediately gave way, falling into two segments—the one sliding with great loss down the slope, and stopt only by the iron paling in front of the New Jail—the other wheeling tumultuously in a *sauve qui peut* movement up towards the Observatory—the plateau in front being thus left open to my retreat, or rather advance.

Shepherd. Oh, sir! but you should hae been a sodger! Wellington or Napoleon wad hae been naething to you—you wad soon hae been a field-marshal—a generalissimo.

North. The left wing had rallied in the hollow—and having formed themselves into a solid square, came up the hill at the *pas de charge*, with a cloud of skirmishers thrown out in front—and unless my eye deceived me, which is not improbable, supported and covered on each flank by cavalry.

Shepherd. That was fearsome.

North. I was now placed between two fires, in imminent danger of being surrounded and taken prisoner, when with one of those sudden *coup d'œils*, which, more than anything else, distinguish the military genius from the mere martinet, I spied an opening to my right, through, or rather over the crags, and, using the but-end of my crutch, I overthrew in an instant the few companies, vainly endeavouring to form into echelon in that part of the position, and, with little or no loss, effected a bold and skilful retrograde movement down the steepest part of the hill, over whose rugged declivities, it is recorded, that Darnley, centuries before, had won the heart of Queen Mary, by galloping his war-horse, in full armour, on the evening after a tournament at Holyrood. Not a regiment had the courage to follow me; and, on reaching the head of Leith Walk I halted on the very spot where my excellent friend the then Lord Provost presented the keys of the City to his most gracious Majesty,[1] on his entrance into the metropolis of the most ancient of his dominions, and gave three-times-three in token of triumph and derision, which were faintly and feebly returned from the pillars of the Parthenon; but I know not till this hour, whether by the discomfited host, or only by the echoes.

Shepherd. "Fortunate Senex!" Wonderfu' auld man!

North. There was I, James, within fifty yards of Ambrose's; so, like a fine, old, bold buck of a red deer, who, after slaughtering or scattering with hoof and horn the pack that had dared to obstruct his noonday flight, from his high haunts at the head of green Glen Aven to his low lair in the heart of the black forest of Abernethy, at last unpursued *takes to soil*, that is, buries himself, back and belly, in a limpid pool of the running waters;—so did I, Christopher North, after giving

[1] George IV., who visited Edinburgh in 1822.

that total overthrow, *take to soil* in the Sanctum Sanctorum of Picardy; and issuing from the cold-bath, vigorous—to use another image—as a great old god in the deep sea,—as round in the shoulders, and as red about the gills too,—astonished the household by the airy and majestic movement with which, like an eagle, I floated into the festal hall,—sung a solo, like a spring nightingale,—then danced a lavolta, to the terror of the chandelier, like a chamois making love on Mont Blanc,—then subsiding out of Dance, which is the Poetry of Motion, into Attitude, which is the Poetry of Rest, finally sunk away into voluptuous diffusion of lith[1] and limb on that celestial sofa, like an impersonation of Alexander the Great, Mark Antony, and Sardanapalus.

Shepherd. Did naebody in the crood ken Christopher North?

North. Their senses, James, were deluded by their imagination. They had set me down as the Edinburgh Advertiser,—and the Edinburgh Advertiser I appeared to be,—instead of the Editor of *Blackwood's Magazine*. The senses are the slaves of the soul, James. "How easily's a bush supposed a bear!" Yet a few voices did exclaim, "Christopher North! Christopher North!" and that magical name did for a moment calm the tumult. But forthwith arose the cry of "Impostor! Impostor!"—"Kit has no need to advertise for a wife!"—"Hang his impudence, for dauring to sham Christopher!"—"He's no far aneuch North for that!"—and in vain, during one pause of my combat and career did I make an appeal to the Public in favour of my personal identity. It would not do, James. I appeared to be a Perkin Warbeck[2] detected; and had nearly paid the penalty of death, or, in other words, forfeited my existence, for merely personating myself! Mr Ambrose, with his usual ingenuity, immediately on hearing the recital of our adventure, and just as he was pouring us out a caulker consummative of our restoration to our wonted placidity and repose, sphinx-like solved the riddle, and devoutly congratulated us on our escape from a Public justly infuriated by the idea, that a counterfeit of Us had thrown himself for a wife upon their curiosity; sagaciously observing, at the same time, that it would be a

[1] *Lith*—joint.

[2] An impostor, who claimed the crown of England against Henry VII., on the ground that he was a son of Edward IV., supposed to have been murdered in the Tower. He was hanged, drawn, and quartered in 1499.

salve to the sore of her signal defeat on the Calton to know, that, after all, it was the veritable Christopher North who had scattered her like sawdust, without distinction of age or sex.

Shepherd. Mr Tickler, do you recolleck what Mr North said to you, a wee while sin'syne, that made ye sae angry? I think you micht pay him back noo in his ain coin. Few owto-beeographers are verawcious historians.

Tickler. Without meaning offence to any individual in particular, they all——lie.

North. They do, like troopers. And did they not, they would not be fit to live.

Shepherd. Nor dee.

Tickler. The man does not live who dáres to outrage humanity by a full, true, and particular account of everything he has said, done, and *thought*, during even the least guilty year of his youth, manhood, or old age.

Shepherd. Especially auld age. Oh! never—never—never—but at the great day o' Judgment, will there be a revelation o' an auld sinner's heart! I appeal to you, Mr North, for the awfu' truth o' that apothegm. Arena ye an auld sinner, sir?

North. I do not know, my dear James, that *to you or any other man* I am bound to confess *that;* sufficient surely, if I do not deny it. I am not a Roman Catholic layman; nor are you, James, so far as I understand, a Roman Catholic priest; nor is the Octagon a Roman Catholic confessional; nor are the Noctes Ambrosianæ Roman Catholic nights of penance and mortification for our manifold sins and iniquities. Yet, my dear James, if, as I believe you do, you mean nothing personal in your question,—and you know I hate all personality either in my own case, or that of others—but interrogate me as a representative of human nature,—then do I most—cheerfully, I was going to say—but I correct myself—most sorrowfully confess, that I am indeed—an old sinner.

Tickler. So am I.

Shepherd. And sae I howp to be—meaning thereby, merely that I may live till I'm as auld as you, Mr Tickler, sir, or you, sir, Mr North. For the only twa perfeck seenonims in the English language are, man and sinner.

North. In utter prostration, and sacred privacy of soul, I almost think now, and have often felt heretofore, man may make a confessional of the breast of his brother man. Once I had such a friend—and to me he was a priest. He has been

so long dead that it seems to me now, that I have almost forgotten him—and that I remember only that he once lived, and that I once loved him with all my affections. One such friend alone can ever, from the very nature of things, belong to any one human being, however endowed by nature and beloved of Heaven. He is felt to stand between us and our upbraiding conscience. In his life lies the strength—the power—the virtue of ours,—in his death the better half of our whole being seems to expire. Such communion of spirit, perhaps, can only be in existences rising towards their meridian; as the hills of life cast longer shadows in the westering hours, we grow—I should not say more suspicious, for that may be too strong a word—but more silent, more self-wrapt, more circumspect—less sympathetic even with kindred and congenial natures, who will sometimes, in our almost sullen moods or theirs, seem as if they were kindred and congenial no more—less devoted to Spirituals, that is, to Ideas, so fender, true, beautiful, and sublime, that they seem to be inhabitants of heaven though born of earth, and to float between the two regions angelical and divine—yet felt to be mortal, human still—the Ideas of passions and desires, and affections, and "impulses that come to us in solitude," to whom we breathe out our souls in silence or in almost silent speech, in utterly mute adoration, or in broken hymns of feeling, believing that the holy enthusiasm will go with us through life to the grave, or rather knowing not, or feeling not, that the grave is anything more for us than a mere word with a somewhat mournful sound, and that life is changeless, cloudless, unfading as the heaven of heavens, that lies to the uplifted fancy in blue immortal calm, round the throne of the eternal Jehovah.

Shepherd. Wi' little trouble, sir, that micht be turned into blank verse, and then, without meanin to flatter you, 'twould be a noble poem.

North. Now, James, "to descend from these imaginative heights," what man, who has ever felt thus, would publish his inner spirit in a printed confession, on wire-wove, hot-pressed paper, in three volumes crown octavo, one guinea and a half in boards?

Shepherd. And wait anxiously for the beginning o' every month, to see himsel reviewed in a pack o' paltry periodic[redacted]

North. Much of himself is gone—gone for ever—no[redacted] from his present being—but even from his memory, e[redacted]

a thousand long summer days, each so intensely beautiful that it seemed immortal, yet all the splendid series now closed for ever and aye. Much remains—with strange transformation—like clear running waters chained by dim fixed frost, or like soft, pure, almost aerial snow-flakes, heaped up into hard, polluted, smoky, sooty wreaths by the road-side; much is reversed into its opposite in nature, joy into grief, mirth into melancholy, hope into despair; and oh! still more mournful, more miserable far, virtue into vice, honour into shame, innocence into guilt;—while Sin is felt to have leavened the whole mass of our being, and Religion herself, once a radiant angel, now moody as Superstition, now fantastic as Philosophy—or haply but the hem of her garment seen like a disappearing cloud, as an angel still, she evanishes from our short-sighted eyes in heaven!

Shepherd. I hae often wushed, my dear sir, that you would publish a few volumes o' Sermons. I dinna fear to say't, 'cause I believe't true, that in that department Christopher North would be noways inferior to Jeremy Taylor.

North. My dear James, Friendship is like Love—So far from being blind, each—I will not say sees what is not—but magnifies what is—and that, too, to such a degree, that Truth becomes Falsehood. Jeremy Taylor had a divine spirit. That divine spirit pervades, permeates all he ever embodied in words. Each sermon of his is like a star—a star that is not only framed of light, and self-burning unconsumed in its own celestial fires, but hung in light as in an atmosphere which it does not itself create, and thus blended and bound in links of light to all the rest of the radiant Host of Heaven. Thus it is that all his sermons are as a galaxy. Read one of them, and it is

> "Fair as a star, when only one
> Is shining in the sky"——

Read many, and you think of some beautiful and sublime night—a bright sky, with the full moon,

> "When round her throne the radiant planets roll,
> And stars unnumber'd gild the glowing Pole."

As the moon is among the stars—so seems the Holy Spirit to hang effulgent among the sacred sparkles of thought issuing

out from the "blue serene," the untroubled firmament of his Christian frame of being?

Shepherd. I believe I was wrangin you in the comparison. He served in the sanctuary—the inner shrine. Others can only bow down and adore at the threshold, and aneath the vestibule o' the temple.

North. In all those works of uninspired men, my dear James, whether in prose or verse, to which we may justifiably give the name of divine, such as Taylor's and Milton's, is there not a spirit invisible to the eyes, inaudible to the ears, of the mere understanding? And if so, who that is wise in humanity, can think that the cultivation of the mere understanding may ever give an insight, or an inhearing, into such truths of our being as such men as Taylor and Milton have communicated to the race in a kind of dimmer revelation?

Shepherd. Nae wise man 'ill believe't. Edicate a' men, and women too, say I, as much as possible—but dinna expeck impossible results. If edication be confined to the mere understaunin, a man may gang out of schools, and institutions, and colleges, after seven years' study, far waur than a coof. For a coof generally kens, or at least suspecks, that he is a coof; but an "Intellectual-all-in-all," as Wordsworth weel ca's him, thinks himsel the verra perfection o' God's creturs. No ae single thing will he believe that he doesna understaun—sae that ye may ken how narrow is his creed—puir blinded moudiwarp, that has deluded itsel into a notion that it's a lynx! Noo, I ca' this Impiety. What say ye, sir?

North. The highest philosophy, whether natural or mental philosophy, my dearest James, leads to Christianity—indeed, the highest mental philosophy *is* Christianity. But all beneath the highest is either dangerous or unsatisfactory, while the low and the lowest is nothing better than blind base scepticism, alternating between superstition and atheism. An ill-instructed, or confusedly and imperfectly informed person, who prides himself upon, and trusts to his understanding——

Shepherd. Is at a' times walkin on the edge o' the bottomless pit.

North. At least wandering in the ways that lead to it.

Shepherd. And that comes to the same thing, sir; for only

gie him length o' time and tether, and in he'll play plump some day at last, just like a sand-blind man botaneezin in a wood, and a' at ance tumblin, through briers and brambles, into the mouth o' an auld unsuspected coal-pit—whereas, a man that was quite blin' a'thegither would either hae had a guide wi' him, or, what is the still safer scheme for ane in his condition, wouldna hae ventured into the wood at a', but sat contented at his ain ingle amang his wife and bairns, and listened wi' decent humility to an orthodox sermon.

North. Without religion, the poor are poor indeed—with it, they may be the only rich.

Shepherd. Oh, sir! but you sometimes say things wi' a sweet sententiousness that sinks into the heart. I hauld it, sir, to be utterly impossible that those men, who, as friends of the education of the people, avow that their character may be raised to the utmost pitch of which it is capable, by the distribution of ae Library o' Useful, and anither o' Enterteenin Knowledge, can have any saving knowledge either o' their ain souls, or the souls o' ither folk, or the trials and temptations to which men are exposed, who work from sunrise to sunset, with their hands, and legs, and backs, for their daily bread, or o' the conditions on which alone they can howp to hauld in health and longevity their moral and their religious being. What's the matter wi' you, Mr Tickler, that you dinna speak ony the nicht?

Tickler. In the company of the truly wise I love to listen. Besides, to tell you the truth, James, that fire has made me rather sleepy.

Shepherd. You're no the least sleepy, sir. Your een are like gimlets—augres.

Tickler. Why, my dear Shepherd, 'tis half-an-hour ago since you promised us a song.

North. Come, James, John Nicholson's daughter.

Tickler. And I will accompany you on the poker and tongs.

Shepherd. I hae nae objections—for you've not only a sowl for music, sir, but a genius too, and the twa dinna always gang thegither—mony a man ha'in as fine an ear for tunes, as the starnies[1] on a dewy nicht that listen to the grass growin roun' the vernal primroses, and yet no able to play on ony

[1] *Starnies*—stars. German, *sterne.*

instrument—on even the flute—let abee[1] the poker and the tangs.

North. A true and fine distinction.

Shepherd. Whereas, sir, a genius for music can bring music out o' amaist ony material substance—be it horn, timmer, or airn, sic are the hidden qualities o' natur that lie asleep, even as if they were dead or were not, till the equally mysterious power that God has given to man wiles or rugs them out to the notice o' the senses—in this case the ear—and then, to be sure, melody or harmony chimes or tinkles accordant and congenial to ony strain o' feelin or o' fancy that the poet sings to the musician, and the musician plays back again, or rather at ane and the same time, to the poet—the twa thegither sae speeritualeezin the verra air o' the room, that the fire seems to burn as purely as the star that may be blinkin in through the half-uncurtained window, frae its ain hame in heaven!

Tickler. Come, then, James, let me accompany you on my favourite instrument; a finer-toned tongs I never took in hand than this of the Octagon. The poker is a little out of tune, I fear—"but that not much." We have "counted the chimes at midnight" before now, my dear Shepherd——

Shepherd. I wush I mayna burst out a-lauchin in the middle o' my sang, for siccan anither feegur I never saw, even in a dream, sir, as you, when you first rax yoursel up your haill heicht on the rug, and then loot doun a wee ower the tangs, swingin to and fro, wi' an expression o' face as serious as if it depended a'thegither at that moment on you, whether or no the earth was to continue to circumvolve on her ain axis.

North. Tickler puts all his soul, James, into whatever he happens to be doing at the time. Why, he brushes his hat, before turning out at two for a constitutional walk, with as much seeming, nay, real earnestness, as Barry Cornwall polishes a dramatic scene, before making an appeal to posterity.

Shepherd. And baith o' them rub aff the nap. Commend me to a rouch hat and a rouch poem—a smooth hat's shabby-genteel, and a smooth poem's no muckle better. I like the woo[2] on the ane to show shadows to the breeze—and the lines o' the ither to wanton like waves on the sea, that, even at the verra cawmest, breaks out every noo and then into little foam-

[1] *Abee*—alone. [2] *Woo*—wool.

furrows, characteristic o' the essential and the eternal difference atween the waters o' an inland loch, and them o' the earth-girdlin ocean.

North. Come, my dear James, don't keep Tickler any longer in untinkling attitude.

(SHEPHERD *sings to* TICKLER'S *tongs and poker accompaniment.*)

SONG.[1]—"*John Nicholson's Daughter.*"

The daisy is fair, the day-lily[2] rare,
The bud o' the rose as sweet as it's bonny—
But there ne'er was a flower, in garden or bower,
Like auld Joe Nicholson's bonny Nannie.
O my Nannie,
My dear little Nannie,
My sweet little niddlety-noddlety Nannie,
There ne'er was a flower,
In garden or bower,
Like auld Joe Nicholson's Nannie.

Ae day she came out wi' a rosy blush,
To milk her twa kye, sae couthie an' cannie[3]—
I cower'd me down at the back o' the bush,
To watch the air o' my bonny Nannie.
O my Nannie, &c. &c.

Her looks so gay, o'er Nature away,
Frae bonny blue een sae mild and mellow—
Saw naething sae sweet, in Nature's array,
Though clad in the morning's gowden yellow.
O my Nannie, &c. &c.

My heart lay beating the flowery green,
In quaking, quavering agitation—
And the tears came trickling doun frae my een,
Wi' perfect love, an' wi' admiration.
O my Nannie, &c. &c.

There's mony a joy in this world below,
And sweet the hopes that to sing were uncannie—
But of all the pleasures I ever can know,
There's none like the love o' my dearest Nannie.
O my Nannie, &c. &c.

[1] By Hogg.

[2] *Day-lily*—asphodel.

[3] *Couthie and cannie*—frank and gentle.

North. Bravo! You have sent that song to our friend Pringle's *Friendship's Offering*—haven't you, James?

Shepherd. I hae—and anither as gude, or better.——

(*Enter* Mr Ambrose *with a hot roasted Round of Beef*—King Pepin *with a couple of boiled Ducks*—Sir David Gam *with a trencher of Tripe, à la Meg Dods—and* Tappytoorie *with a Haggis. Pickled Salmon, Welsh Rabbits, &c. &c.—and, as usual, Oysters, raw, stewed, scolloped, roasted, and pickled, of course—Rizzards, Finzeans, Red Herrings.*)

Shepherd. You've really served up a bonny wee neat bit sooper for three, Mr Awmrose. I hate, for my ain pairt, to see a table overloaded. It's sae vulgar. I'll carve the haggis.[1]

North. I beseech you, James, for the love of all that is dear to you, here and hereafter, to hold your hand. Stop—stop—stop!

(*The* Shepherd *sticks the Haggis, and the Table is instantly overflowed.*)

Shepherd. Heavens and earth! Is the Haggis mad? Tooels![2] Awmrose—tooels! Safe us! we'll a' be drooned!

[Picardy *and his Tail rush out for towels.*

North. Rash man! what ruin have you wrought! See how it has overflown the deck from stem to stern—we shall all be lost.

Shepherd. Sweepin everything afore it! Whare's the puir biled[3] dyucks? Only the croon-head o' the roun' visible! Tooels—tooels—tooels! Send roun' the fire-drum through the city.

(*Re-enter* Picardy *and "the Rest" with napery.*)

Mr Ambrose. Mr North, I look to you for orders in the midst of this alarming calamity. Shall I order in more strength?

Shepherd. See—see—sir! it's creeping alang the carpet! We're like men left on a sandbank, when the tide's comin in rampaugin. Oh! that I had insured my life! Oh! that I had learned to soom![4] What wull become o' my widow and my fatherless children!

North. Silence! Let us die like men.

Shepherd. O, Lord! its ower our insteps already! Open

[1] A *haggis* is the stomach of a sheep filled with the lungs, heart, and liver of the same animal, minced with suet, onions, salt, and pepper.

[2] *Tooels*—towels. [3] *Biled*—boiled. [4] *Soom*—swim.

a' the doors and wundows—and let it find its ain level. I'll up on a chair in the meantime.

(*The* SHEPHERD *mounts the back of The Chair, and draws* MR NORTH *up after him.*)

Sit on my shouthers, my dear—dear—dearest sir. I insist on't. Mr Tickler, Mr Awmrose, King Pepin, Sir David, and Tappitourie—you wee lazy deevil—help Mr North up—help Mr North up on my shouthers!

(MR NORTH *is elevated, Crutch and all, astride on the* SHEPHERD'S *shoulders.*)

North. Good God! Where is Mr Tickler?

Shepherd. Look—look—look, sir,—yonner he's staunin on the brace-piece—on the mantel! Noo, Awmrose, and a' ye waiters, make your escape, and leave us to our fate. Oh! Mr North, gie us a prayer.—What for do you look so meeserable, Mr Tickler? Death is common—'tis but "passing through Natur' to Eternity!" And yet—to be drooned in haggis 'ill be waur than Clarence's dream! Alack and alas-a-day! it's up to the ring o' the bell-rope! Speak, Mr Tickler—oh speak, sir—Men in our dismal condition—Are you sittin easy, Mr North?

North. Quite so, my dear James, I am perfectly resigned. Yet, what is to become of Maga——

Shepherd. Oh my wee Jamie!

North. I fear I am very heavy, James.

Shepherd. Dinna say't, sir—dinna say't. I'm like the pious Æneas bearin his father Ancheeses through the flames o' Troy. The similie doesna haud gude at a' points—I wish it did—Oh, haud fast, sir, wi' your arms roun' my neck, lest the cruel tyrant o' a haggis swoop ye clean awa under the side-board to inevitable death!

North. Far as the eye can reach it is one wide wilderness of suet!

Tickler. Hurra! hurra! hurra!

Shepherd. Do you hear the puir gentleman, Christopher? It's affeckin to men in our condition to see the pictur we hae baith read o' in accounts o' shipwrecks realeezed! Timothy's gane mad! Hear till him shoutin wi' horrid glee on the brink o' eternity!

Tickler. Hurra! hurra! hurra!

North. Horrible! most horrible!

Tickler. The haggis is subsiding—the haggis is subsiding!

It has fallen an inch by the sabbase[1] since the Shepherd's last ejaculation.

Shepherd. If you're tellin a lee, Timothy, I'll wade ower to you, and bring you doun aff the mantel wi' the crutch.—Can I believe my een? It *is* subseedin. Hurraw! hurraw! hurraw! Nine times nine, Mr North, to our deliverance—and the Protestant ascendancy!

Omnes. Hurra! hurraw! hurree!

Shepherd. Noo, sir, you may dismunt.

(*Re-enter the Household, with the immediate neighbourhood.*)

Shepherd. High Jinks! High Jinks! High Jinks! The haggis has putten out the fire, and sealed up the boiler——

(*The* Shepherd *descends upon all fours, and lets* Mr North *off gently.*)

North. Oh James, I am a daft old man!

Shepherd. No sae silly as Solomon, sir, at your time o' life. Noo for sooper.

Tickler. How the devil am I to get down?

Shepherd. How the deevil did you get up? Oh, ho, by the gas ladder! And it's been removed in the confusion. Either jump doun—or stay where you are, Mr Tickler.

Tickler. Come now, James—shove over the ladder.

Shepherd. O that Mr Chantrey was here to sculptur him in that attitude! Streitch out your richt haun! A wee grain heicher! Hoo gran' he looks in basso-relievo!

Tickler. Shove over the ladder, you son of the mist, or I'll brain you with the crystal.

Shepherd. Sit doun, Mr North, opposite to me—and Mr Awmrose, tak roun' my plate for a shave o' the beef.—Isna he the perfeck pictur o' the late Right Honourable William Pitt?—Shall I send you, sir, some o' the biled dyuck?

North. If you please, James—Rather "Like Patience on a monument smiling at Grief."

Shepherd. Gie us a sang, Mr Tickler, and then you shall hae the ladder. I never preed a roasted roun' afore—it's real savoury.

North.—

"Oh! who can tell how hard it is to climb
The height where Fame's proud temple shines afar!"

[1] *Sabbase.* It has been suggested that this word means *decrease*—from the French *s'abaisser*,—and this I think highly probable, although I know of no authority for the word, either oral or written.

Shepherd. I'll let you doun, Mr Tickler, if you touch the ceilin wi' your fingers. Itherwise, you maun sing a sang.

[TICKLER *tries, and fails.*

Tickler. Well, if I must sing, let me have a tumbler of toddy.

Shepherd. Ye shall hae that, sir.

[*The* SHEPHERD *fills a tumbler from the jug, and balancing it on the cross of the crutch, reaches it up to* MR TICKLER.

(TICKLER *sings.*)

THE TWA MAGICIANS.

The lady stands in her bower door,
As straight as willow wand;
The blacksmith stood a little forbye,
Wi' hammer in his hand.

Weel may ye dress ye, lady fair,
Into your robes o' red,
Before the morn at this same time,
I'll loose your silken snood.

Awa, awa, ye coal-black smith,
Wud ye do me the wrang,
To think to gain my virgin love,
That I hae kept sae lang?

Then she has hadden up her hand,
And she sware by the mold,
I wudna be a blacksmith's wife
For a' the warld's gold.

O! rather I were dead and gone,
And my body laid in grave,
Ere a rusty stock o' coal-black smith
My virgin love should have.

But he has hadden up his hand,
And he sware by the mass,
I'll cause ye be my light leman,
For the hauf o' that and less.

Chorus.

O bide, lady bide,
And aye he bade her bide;
The rusty smith your leman shall be,
For a' your meikle pride.

Then she became a turtle dow,
To fly up in the air;
And he became another dow,
And they flew pair and pair.
O bide, lady, bide, &c.

She turn'd herself into an eel,
To swim into yon burn;
And he became a speckled trout,
To give the eel a turn.
O bide, lady, bide, &c.

Then she became a duck, a duck,
Upon a reedy lake;
And the smith wi' her to soom or dive,
Became a rose-kamed drake.
O bide, lady, bide, &c.

She turned herself into a hare,
To rin ower hill and hollow;
And he became a gude greyhound,
And boldly he did follow.
O bide, lady, bide, &c.

Then she became a gay grey mare,
And stood in yonder slack;
And he became a gilt saddle,
And sat upon her back.
O bide, lady, bide, &c.

Then she became a het girdle,
And he became a cake;
And a' the ways she turned hersel,
The blacksmith was her make.[1]
O bide, lady, bide, &c.

She turned herself into a ship,
To sail out-ower the flood;
He ca'd a nail intil her tail,
And syne the ship she stood.
O bide, lady, bide, &c.

Then she became a silken plaid,
And stretch'd upon a bed:
And he became a green covering,
And thus the twa were wed.

[1] *Make*—match.

Chorus.
Was she wae, he held her sae,
And still he bade her bide;
The rusty smith her leman was,
For a' her meikle pride.

Shepherd. Noo—sir—here is the ladder to you—for which you're indebted to Mr Peter Buchan, o' Peterhead, the ingenious collector o' the *Ancient Ballads*, frae which ye have chanted so speeritedly the speerited "Twa Magicians." It's a capital collection—and should be added in a' libraries, to Percy, and Ritson, and Headley, and the *Minstrelsy o' the Border*, and John Finlay, and Robert Jamieson, and Gilchrist and Kinloch, and the Quarto o' that clever chiel, Motherwell[1] o' Paisley, wha's no only a gude collector and commentator o' ballads, but a gude writer o' them too—as he has proved by that real poetical address o' a Northman to his Swurd in ane o' the Annals. Come awa doun, sir—come awa doun. Tak tent, for the steps are gey shoggly.[2] Noo—sir—fa' to the roun'.

Tickler. I have no appetite, James. I have been suffering all night under a complication of capital complaints—the tooth-ache, which like a fine attenuated red-hot steel-sting, keeps shooting through an old rugged stump, which to touch with my tongue is agony—the tongue-ache, from a blister on that weapon, that I begin to fear may prove cancerous—the lip-ache, from having accidentally given myself a labial wound in sucking out an oyster—the eye-ache, as if an absolute worm were laying eggs in the pupil—the ear-ache, tinglin and stounin[3] to the very brain, till my drum seems beating for evening parade—to which add a head-ache of the hammer-and-anvil kind—and a stomach-ache, that seems to intimate that dyspepsy is about to be converted into cholera morbus; and you have a partial enumeration of the causes that at present deaden my appetite—and that prevented me from chanting the ballad with my usual vivacity. However—I will trouble you for a duck.

Shepherd. You canna be in the least pain, wi' sae mony complaints as these—for they maun neutraleeze ane anither. But even if they dinna, I believe mysel, wi' the Stoics, that pain's nae evil—Dinna you, Mr North?

[1] William Motherwell, born in 1798; the author of some spirited ballads, and editor of *Minstrelsy, Ancient and Modern*. He died in 1835.

[2] *Shoggly*—shaky.

[3] *Stounin*—aching.

North. Certainly. But, Tickler, you know, has many odd crotchets. Pray, James, have you read the last number of the *Edinburgh Review*?[1]

Shepherd. Pray, Mr North, have you loupt ower the Castle o' Embro'? I wud as sune offer to walk through the interior o' Africa, frae Tripoli to Timbuctoo. Howsomever, I did read Mr Jaffray's article on the Decline and Fa' o' Poetry?[2]

North. I read with pleasure all that my ingenious brother writes; but he is often a little paradoxical or so — sometimes a little superficial, I fear, in his philosophy and criticism. However, he handles delicately and gracefully every subject he touches; and seldom fails to leave on it something of the brightness of his genius.

Shepherd. The article's dounricht intolerable and untenable nonsense frae beginnin to end. Whether Poetry's exhowsted or no, it's no for me to say; but Mr Jaffray himsel, though that could scarcely hae been his end in writin 't, has proved in his article, beyond a' doubt, that Criticism is in the dead-thraws.[3]

North. I was somewhat surprised certainly, James, to hear my brother absolutely asserting, that in our Poetry since Cowper, there is "little invention, little direct or overwhelming passion, and little natural simplicity,"—"no sudden unconscious bursts either of nature or passion — no casual flashes of fancy—no slight passing intimations of deep but latent emotions—no rash darings of untutored genius soaring proudly up into the infinite unknown."

Shepherd. After havin in every ither article, for the last twunty years, laboured wi' a' his power to pruve the direck contrar! Noo that the New Licht has brak in on him, he maun look back on the Francey Jaffray that keepit year after year oratorically — I mean oracularly — haranguin on the terrible and awfu' bursts o' a' the dark and fierce passions in Byron's poetry, as a wee demented madman or lunatic.

North. But what say you, James, to "no rash darings of untutored genius"?

Shepherd. That it's either nonsensical or fause. If he allude to the great leevin Poets wha have had College educa-

[1] No. xcv.

[2] The article referred to is a review of *The Fall of Nineveh, a Poem*, by Edwin Atherstone, 1828.

[3] *Dead-thraws*—death-throes.

tions, then it's nonsensical; for hoo could they "show rash daurin's o' untutured genius," seein that ane and a' o' them had tutors, public and preevat, for years? If he allude to me, and Allan Kinnigam, and Bloomfield, and Clare, and ithers, wha were left to educate oursels, then it's fause. "Nae rash daurin's o' untutored genius" indeed! I'll thank him, or the likes o' him, wi' a' his tutored genius, to write "Kilmeny,"[1] or "Mary Lee the Female Pilgrim o' the Sun," or ae single prose tale o' honest Allan's, or ae single sang like mony o' his spirit-stirrin strains baith about the land and the sea. "Nae rash daurin's o' untutored genius" indeed! Impident body, I wush he mayna hae been fou—— or rather, I wush he may—for afore I declair't mysel a Tory, he himsel told the warld in sae mony words, that my Poetry was fu' o' "Daurin flichts o' untutored genius;" and sae it is, in spite o' the ignorant impertinence o' the like o' him, and ither envious elves that out o' natural or political malice will annonymously slump half-a-dizzen o' men o' genius ower into ae clause o' a sentence, which, when you analeeze 't, is just naething mair nor less than a self-evident and contemptible lee.

North. How I admire the Doric dialect, my dear James! What a difference to the ear in the sound of *lie* and *lee!*

Shepherd. My ear detects nane. But supposing there to be a difference i' the soun', there's nane in the sense; and Mr Jaffray, either in the ae creetique or the ither, maun hae said what is no true.

North. A mere matter of taste—of opinion, James; and will you not allow a man to change his mind?

Shepherd. No, I wont. At least, no an auld man like Mr Jaffray. It's just in mere matters o' taste and opinion that I'll no alloo him or ony ither supperannated creetic to say that he has changed his mind—without at least tellin him that he's a coof[2]—and that what he may conceive to be a change o' opinion, is only a decay o' faculties—a dotage o' the mind.

North. My brother complains that we have no poetry nowadays, containing "slight passing intimations of deep but latent emotions"—yet in three or four most elaborate disquisitions of his on the genius of Campbell, the power of thus, by slight passing intimations, raising "deep but latent emotions," is

[1] The *gem* of Hogg's *Queen's Wake.*

[2] *Coof*—blockhead.

dwelt upon as the power characteristic of that delightful poet, beyond almost all other men that ever wrote!

Shepherd. Hoo can a man, after contradickin himsel in that silly and senseless manner, look himsel in the face in the morning, when he sits doun to shave?

North. My brother goes on to say of Modern British Poets, that "their chief fault is the want of subject and matter—the absence of real persons, intelligible interests, and conceivable incidents"——

Shepherd. I really wush, sir, you would gie ower quotin drivel, for it maks me sick. Ca' you that leavin, "on every subject he touches, something o' the brichtness o' his genius"?

North. Why, I confess, James, that here my respected brother is indeed a great goose.

Shepherd. Or rather a wee bit duck—cryin quack, quack, quack—as it plouters amang the dubs; and then streekin itsel up, as if it were trying to staun' on its tail, and flappin the dirty pearls frae its wings, and lengthenin out its neck like an eel, and lookin roun' about it wi' a sort o' triumph—cries quack, quack, quack again, and then dives doun in the gulf profound for anither mouthfu' o' something, leavin naething veesible in the upper warld but its—doup!

North. The poetry of Crabbe and Scott is fuller of "real persons, intelligible interests, and conceivable incidents," than any other poetry—Shakespeare of course always excepted—perhaps yet in existence; and this, or nearly this, my brother has said at least a thousand times—showing, and well showing—for I repeat, James, "that on every subject he handles, he leaves something of the brightness of his genius,"—that therein lies their power and glory.

Shepherd. And I hae only to repeat, sir, that I wunder hoo your brither can after a' that look himsel in the face in the mornin when he sits doun to shave.

North. My brother, James, says, that all the Poems of Crabbe, Scott, Byron, Moore, Southey, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Campbell, yourself, and all other poets now living or dead since Cowper and Burns,—"are but shadows, we fear, that have no independent or substantial existence — and though reflected from grand and beautiful originals, have but little chance" of being remembered, and so forth.—What say you to that, James?

Shepherd. I say that that's either no in the *Edinburgh Review*,

or that the Editor ought to be in a strait-waistcoat. For the man that raves in that fashion's no safe—and some day 'll bite.

North. Scott's Poems, he says, are mere reflections of the Romances of Chivalry—which, I admit, he could not have said, had he ever read one single romance of chivalry—either in prose or verse—as you, James, know well, that in all points whatever they are the very antipodes——

Shepherd. I never read—nor even saw ane o' the Romances o' Cheevalry in my life—excepp you ca' Blind Harry's *Sir William Wallace* ane,—and it, to be sure, though a glorious auld thing, has about as little resemblance to *Marmion*—as a peat-car—nae contemptible vehicle for rattlin either up or doun a hill wi' an active nag—to a war-chariot armed wi' scythes, and thunderin ower the field wi' four white horses.

North. Then Wordsworth, it seems, went back to the early ballads for his *Excursion*, *Sonnets to Liberty*, &c. &c., and all others alike to Spenser and Shakespeare, and——

Shepherd. Oh, sir! tell me what I hae said or dune to deserve sic drivel as this being poured out upon me as a punishment; and I wull mak ony apology you like to demand, doun even to axin pardon at your feet on my bare knees!

North. My brother sums up by setting Mr Atherstone, as a poet, by the side of Mr Southey!

Shepherd. Mr Atherstane, from what I hae seen o' his verses, may just as well be set at ance by the side o' Shakespeare. Mr Soothey is a poet o' the very highest order, sir—and "Thalaba," "Madoc," "Roderic," "Kehama"—are grand soun's, that at ance fill the mind wi' images o' high achievement. Has Mr Atherstane really written poems like them? If sae, I wush I was introduced to him—and that he was sittin here just noo at the Noctes.

North. I should have no objections, James—none in the world; but Mr Atherstone (I say it reluctantly) is not much of a poet.[1] Something of a painter he may be, though his conceptions, vivid enough in themselves, seem to arise in series, and often too in great confusion and disarray; nor has he been able to produce a single picture, having in it Unity,

[1] Professor Wilson reviewed Atherstone's "Fall of Nineveh" in *Blackwood's Magazine*, vol. xxvii, p. 137—taking a very different estimate of it from that proclaimed by Lord Jeffrey; and the public seems to have ratified the Professor's verdict by allowing "The Fall" to drop quietly into oblivion.

comprehending all the details, great and small, to which they are all made to conform, and which is felt to be the spirit of the whole. Till he does this, he is not even a painter; and for the truth of what I say, I refer him to his friend Martin. In the same article, my brother láments the loss, "in the morn and liquid dew of their youth" of Kirke White, Keats, and Pollok—and "that powerful, though more uncertain genius, less prematurely extinguished, Shelley." Now, why did he not encourage, animate, and spread the fame of these poets while they were alive, to reap profit and pleasure from his praise?

Shepherd. I fancy, because he cared little or naething about them, and either never knew, or forgot, that such poets were in existence.

North. Henry Kirke White,[1] when chilled by the frost of criticism, would have had his blood warmed within the very core of his heart, by a panegyric on his genius in such a work, so powerful for good and evil, as the *Edinburgh Review* then was.—But no—not a hint dropped of "the morn and liquid dew of his life," till many years after his pure spirit had soared to heaven!

Shepherd. While Mr Soothey cheered the life o' the young pensive bard, and after death embalmed his name in one of the most beautiful pieces of biography in the language!

North. My brother praised Keats,[2] it is true, but somewhat tardily, and with no discrimination; and, to this hour, he has taken no notice of his *Lamia and Isabella*, in which Keats's genius is seen to the best advantage; while, from the utter silence observed towards him in general, it is plain enough that he cares nothing for him, and that it is not unjust or unfair to suspect the insertion of the article on *Endymion* was brought about by a Cockney job of Hunt or Hazlitt's.

Shepherd. Is his review o' Pollok's[3] *Course of Time* a fine one?

North. That noble Poem has never been so much as mentioned,—though, no doubt, the mere introduction of Pollok's name is thought to be a sufficient sacrifice to the genius of that singularly gifted young man.

Shepherd. And what said he o' Shelley?[4]

North. Never, to the best of my remembrance, one single

[1] Born in 1785; died in 1806. [2] Born in 1796; died in 1820.
[3] Robert Pollok, author of *The Course of Time*, died in 1827, aged 28.
[4] Born in 1792; drowned in the Gulf of Lerici in 1822.

syllable. Now, my dear James, all this may be very consistent with the principles on which my brother conducts his Review; but nobody can say that it is a high-minded, fine-souled, warm-hearted system. The voice of praise can be of no avail then,—

"Nor flattery soothe the dull cold ear of death."

Still, with all his deficiencies, inconsistencies, and contradictions, my brother is a charming critic.

Shepherd. O' a' the creetics o' this age, you alone, sir, have shown that you have a heart. You're the best creetic that ever existed o' warks o' imagination.

North. That seems to be the general opinion. Yet even I am not perfection.

Shepherd. Dinna alloo yoursel to say sae, sir; you're far ower modest.

North. There's Mr David Lester Richardson,[1] or some other dissatisfied person, who says, in that entertaining work, the *London Weekly Review*, that the last degradation that can befall a writer, is to be praised in *Blackwood's Magazine.*

Shepherd. Faith, he's maybe no far wrang, there. Is that the Diamond Poet, who published three hunder and sixty-five panegyrics on his ain genius, by way o' Notes and Illustrations to his Sonnets—ane for every day in the year?

North. The same.

Shepherd. His modesty's amaist as great's your ain, sir; for he canna bring himsel to believe that onybody will credit his being a poet, without ha'in his judgment overpowered by the testimony o' a cloud o' witnesses.

North. Perhaps he was nettled, James, by my exposure of that puffery; but the truth is, I have a great kindness for David, and the very first volume, either of prose or verse, he publishes, I shall try him with praise in *Blackwood;* and he will be surprised to find that it is far more delightful, and not nearly so degrading as he or his contributor, during a fit of the jaundice, imagined.[2]

Shepherd. Tak care ye dinna turn his head—for I should

[1] A forgotten writer, the author of some sonnets.

[2] Mr Lockhart has a pleasant parable *apropos* of those delicate organisations which profess themselves delighted to swallow any amount of censure from their reviewers, but incapable of digesting the slightest admixture of praise. "It

be sorry o' that, as, if he's the Editor o' the *Weekly Review*, he's a clever fallow.

North. Hazlitt, too, has lately somewhere said—I think in that acute paper, the *Examiner*—that Maga is a work of which no man will mention the name, who has any regard to his own character. Now, Hazlitt has not written a paper of any kind whatever, these last ten years, without using the most unwarrantable, and unprovoked, and unnecessary liberties, with Maga's name. Therefore, Hazlitt is a man who has no regard to his own character?

Shepherd. You hae him on the hip there, sir. It's a good syllogism.

North. Yet you see, James, the inutility of the syllogistic form of reasoning; for it ends with proving what has already been admitted by all the world.

Shepherd. I see your meanin, sir—Oh! but you're a desperate sateerical auld chiel, and plant your skein-dhu[1]——

North. The blundering blockhead, James, drove his own knife up to the hilt in his own side, beneath the fifth rib, in his rage to strike a harmless old man like me, who was not minding the maniac, and had not kicked him for years.

Shepherd. Oh! man, but there's a cawm, cauld, clear, glitterin cruelty in the expression o' your een the noo, that's no canny, and you'll obleege me by takin aff your glass; for the taste o' that Glenlivet's aneuch to saften the sowl towards the greatest reprobate. A caulker o't could mak a man for a minute or twa amaist endure a Cockney.

North. Maga, James, is an Engine.

Shepherd. An Ingine!—Lord safe us!—She is that!—An Ingine o' five hunder Elephant-power. Nae mortal man

is related," says he, "of Mr Alderman Faulkener, of convivial memory, that one night when he expected his guests to sit late and try the strength of his claret and his head, he took the precaution of placing in his wine-glass a strawberry, which his doctor, he said, had recommended to him on account of its cooling qualities. On the faith of this specific he drank even more deeply, and, as might be expected, was carried away at an earlier period, and in rather a worse state than was usual with him. When some of his friends condoled with him next day, and attributed his misfortune to six bottles of claret which he had imbibed, the Alderman was extremely indignant,—'The claret,' he said, 'was sound, and never could do any man any harm—his discomfiture was altogether caused by that damned single strawberry,' which he had kept all night at the bottom of his glass."—*Quarterly Review*, vol. xlix., p. 96.

[1] *Skein-dhu*, (Gaelic)—dagger; literally, dark knife.

should be intrusted wi' sic an Ingine; it's aneuch to mak ony man as prood as Nebuchadnezzar—and if you dinna tak tent, wha kens but you may share the fate o' that unfortunate monarch. You would be a curious cretur on a' fowres, munchin gerse!

North. Maga is, you know, my dear James, an omnipresence. In hall and hut alike her visits are hailed by the heart-acclamation of young and old—her face beams in equal beauty by the firelight reflected from brass mirrors bright as gold, within a chimney-piece of the dove-coloured Italian marble—and by the peat-low frae the ingle o' the "auld clay biggin"——

Shepherd. As noo and then the melted snaw-flakes drip doun the open lum, sir, and the reading lassie, while the flickering flame momentarily leaves a darker shade ower the gay or serious page, louts doun her silken snood nearer to the embers, that the circle mayna lose ae word o' auld Christopher North, or the Shepherd, or Delta, whether Delta be singin a sweet sang, aiblins about Mary queen o' Scotland, or telling a comical story in a Chapter in the Life and Adventures o' that curious Dalkeith tailor body, now retired, as I hear, frae bizziness, ha'in taen out his capital altogether, and become a Box-proprietor on the Esk—Mansie Wauch.[1]

North. That, James, is true fame. The consciousness of a circulation confined to certain classes—an exclusive circulation, would be the death, or paralysis of my genius.

Shepherd. 'Cause, in that case, you would have to compose for an exclusive circulation—Oh, dear! oh, dear! oh, dear! perhaps a Cockney coterie,—and then to a' mankind you would become either unintelligible or disgustin! Does your body, sir, ever get wearied wi' writin? for as to your mind, ane micht as weel ask if the *vis generawtrix Naturæ* ever got wearied.

North. I write, James, *by screeds.* Whenever I feel the fit coming on, which it often does about ten in the morning—never sooner—I encourage it by a caulker—a mere nut-shell, which my dear friend the English Opium-Eater would toss off in laudanum: as soon as I feel that there is no danger of

[1] *The Life of Mansie Wauch, Tailor in Dalkeith*, a work in which certain phases of Scottish life and manners are portrayed in characters irresistibly comical.

a relapse—that my demon will be with me during the whole day—I order dinner at nine—shut myself up within triple doors—and as I look at the inner one in its green-baized brass-knobbedness, there comes upon me an inspiring sense of security from all interruption, nay, from all connection or even remembrance of the outer world. The silver salver—you know it, James—with a few rusks, and half a pint of Madeira—a moderation which Sir Humphry must approve—stands within a few inches of my writing hand. No desk! an inclined plane—except in bed—is my abhorrence. All glorious articles must be written on a dead flat.

Shepherd. No if you use the sclate.[1]

North. At two o'clock, from September to March—true to a minute—Robin Redbreast comes hopping in through one unglazed diamond of my low lattice—Mousey peers with his black eyes and whiskered nose out of his hole, and the two contend in pretty gambols about the crumbs.

Shepherd. What a pictur o' Innocence! Oh my dear, dear Mr North, I've aften thocht you were ower gude—ower tender o' natur—ower simple for this wicked, hard, cunnin warld.

North. Mousey, after feeding and fun, glides into his hole behind the wainscot, and Robin flits, with a small sweet song, into the shrubbery—and then I at it again tooth and nail——

Shepherd. Sacrifeecin, perhaps, the peace not only o' individuals but o' families—by makin them, and a' that's conneckit wi' them, meeserable in life, and sae odious and infamous after death, that the son gies up his father's name a'thegither; if the surname be ane o' ae syllable, the better to obliterate a remembrance o't even in his ain mind, adoptin ane o' four or five—and changin the Christian name, too, into something heathenish, as, for example, Tam into Heliogabawlus.

North. Just as the gloamin begins to deepen on the wire-wove paper, so that there is felt a slight strain on the optic nerve, and pots and hooks assume a hieroglyphical character—inaudibly doth door after door open like a dream—and Helen, with a wax candle in either pretty small hand,

[1] It is recorded of the Shepherd, that he used to draft his compositions on a slate.

between which are seen shining her large blue eyes, soft in their brightness, in a moment is at my side, and my manuscripts are at once illuminated.

Shepherd. She's a bonny lassie. I saw a pictur very like her the day, in Mr Galli's exhibition on the Mound——

North. An exhibition which all people should visit. It contains many excellent, and some splendid pictures.

Shepherd. Oh! but the Auld Masters, sir, had a deep sense o' the beautifu'.

North. No soup—but first a sole, then a beef-steak, and then a chicken—with a finish o' a few tartlets, and a saucer of Parmesan—judiciously interspersed with an occasional sip of old hock ending in a gulp—a caulker, of course—and then at the MSS. again, over a Scotch pint of claret. By midnight—

"Ae wee short hour ayont the twal;"

and lo! ready for the devil a sheet of Maga!

Shepherd. And whan do you rise?

North. Early. Precisely at nine (I speak of winter) Helen is at my bedside—

"And, like the murmur of a dream,
I hear her breathe my name."

Shepherd. That's scarcely safe, sir.

North. God bless the dear child!—she loves me with all the reverential affection of a granddaughter. While I keep getting fairly awake, she stirs up the fire, that has been napping during the night, and, arranging with delicate dexterity my shirt, drawers, stockings, breeches, &c. on a neat mahogany screen, places it before the glow—and disappears. In about half-an-hour I am apparelled—and just as I have given the last touch to the topmost curl of my wig——

Shepherd. I like ye best bald——

North. The clear tingle-ingle-ing of the small brass bell in the hand of my pretty maiden——

Shepherd. That's the thing—and no ane o' thae infernal bells that the man-servant in some houses keeps ringing for ten minutes, as if he meant to awauken a' the folk in the neist street——

North. Chimes me down to the parlour——

Shepherd. Nae mair aboot your domestic economy, sir—You're gettin egotustical.

North. I wrote "Christopher in his Sporting Jacket,"[1] James—forty pages of Maga—at two such sittings.

Shepherd. I dinna believe you—though you should swear't on the Bible.

North. At five such sittings I have more than once written—with this hand——

Shepherd. And a lang-fingered, bony, ghaunt, formidable-lookin haun it is—like the haun o' grim death—clutchin——

North. Written the whole Magazine—an entire Number,[2] James——

Shepherd. And a desperate bad ane it must hae been——

North. No, James—brilliant as the Aurora Borealis—musical as is Apollo's lute.

Shepherd. And that's the way ye serve your contributors! Flingin their capital articles intil the Balaam-box, that your ain trash may——

North. Trash! What the devil do you mean by trash, sir?

Shepherd. I just mean a hantle o' your ain articles,—especially them that you're fondest and proudest o'—sic as "Streams"[3]—"Cottages"[4]—"Hints for Holidays"[5]——

North. Oh! James—James—that genius should be thus debased by jealousy——

Shepherd. Me jealous o' you? That's a gude ane. But what for didna you send me out a' the Anuwals o' the year as you promised? I hate folk that promises and ne'er performs.

North. By the rule of contraries, my character to a tittle. I promise nothing—and perform everything. But the reason, James, was, that I had not them to send. The *Keepsake* I have not got yet—but I have Mr Alaric Watts' *Souvenir* in my pocket—there,—well caught, ye cricketer. Ay, you may well turn up your eyes in admiration—for of all the embellish-

[1] See *Recreations of Christopher North*, vol. i. p. 1; or *Blackwood's Magazine*, No. CXLIII.

[2] In some of the "double" Numbers of *Blackwood's Magazine*, Professor Wilson wrote as much as would have filled one Number or more—for instance, in the double Numbers for August 1830 and May 1834; but he never wrote any one whole continuous Number.

[3] *Blackwood's Magazine*, No. CXI.

[4] Ibid., No. CX.

[5] Ibid., Nos. CXIV., CXVI., CXVII.

ments—of all the engravings I ever beheld, these are the most exquisitely beautiful.

Shepherd. Sir Walter? Ma faith! The thing's dune at last. The verra man himsel, as if you were lookin at him through the wrang end o' a telescope! Only see his hauns! The big, fat, roun', firm back o' his hauns! I should hae said in an instant—that's Sir Walter—had I seen nae mair than just by themsels thae hauns! Hoo are ye, Sir Walter? Hoo are ye, sir? I'm glad to see ye lookin sae weel. Na—am na I a fule, Mr North, to be speakin till an eemage, as if it were—Lord bless him—the verra leevin glory o' Scotland?

North. I request posterity to be informed, that Lesly's is the best likeness of Sir Walter Scott ever achieved—face, figure, air, manner—all characteristically complete. Lesly is a genuine genius—so is Stephanoff.

Shepherd. And is the writin in the *Souvenir* gude, sir?

North. Excellent. Taken altogether, the volume is a formidable rival, competitor, or compeer, to the *Anniversary*——

Shepherd. In leeterature—my cry has ever been—Free Tredd, Free Tredd. If the *Keepsake* beats the beauty o' the *Souvenir*, she may change her name into the Phœnix or the Bird o' Paradise.

North. Pocket the affront, James.

Shepherd. Hae you made me a present o't, sir, outricht? You hae!—then alloo me to treat you wi' the eisters at my ain expense.

North. To purchase the *Souvenir* in oysters! Oh! the horrid thought!

Shepherd. Rax me ower that newspaper, my dear sir, that I may wrap it——

North. Nay, we must not destroy Mr Ambrose's *Courier*.

Shepherd. Is that the *Coureer?* It's the best paper, the *Coureer*, o' the haill set.

North. There cannot be a better paper, James—but there may be as good—and the *Standard* is so—the two together, well studied, may set a young Member of Parliament up in politics. Both true to the backbone. "Alike—yet oh, how different!" Mr Street is a man of great talents—and Mr Gifford an admirable writer. As for the Doctor——

Shepherd. He hasna his match in a' England, I'm sure, for wut, satire, and fun, and deevil tak me if he's no also a maist

poo'rfu reasoner. Wut and Intellect are twun-brithers, and sae like that, but for a sort o' smile native to the face o' the first, I'll defy you to tell the ane frae the ither!

North. These are my Evening Papers, James; and my Morning ones are the *Morning Post*, always full of news of the fashionable world, and excellent and able in its politics—the *Morning Journal*, most spirited and vigorous—the *Morning Herald*, miscellaneous to a most amusing degree, and teeming with various matter—the *Morning Chronicle*—you know the worthy editor, Mr Black,[1] James?

Shepherd. A fine fallow—gin he werena a Whig—and a great freen o' dear Gray's[2]——

North. Of itself a good sign of his heart;—but though a Whig, not a bitter one,—and, though rather lengthy, a writer of much talent and information.

Shepherd. Do you no read The auld *Times?*

North. What! not read the Leading Journal of Europe? Daily. Inexplicable altogether in its political machinery, I admire the strength and audacity of the bold old *Times*. I also see that moderate and very able paper, the *Globe*.

Shepherd. Faith there's the Embro' *Saturday Evening Post* turnin out a maist capital paper. There's smeddum yonner, Mr North.

North. There *is* smeddum yonder, James. The pen of one first-rate writer may be weekly traced in its leading articles, and occasionally elsewhere—and some of his coadjutors are apparently men of power and principle. It has—though young—a good circulation, and is sure to succeed. A true Tory.

Shepherd. What's the real *bonny feedy* state o' the case, sir, the noo, wi' what's ca'd the Question o' Catholic Emancipawtion?

Tickler (*yawning out of a profound sleep*). Hollo! where am I? Who are you, gentlemen, intruding on a sober citizen's privacy at this hour of the night? I say, who are you?

Shepherd. He thinks himsel at hame.—I really had nae notion, sir, that Mr Tickler was sae soon made fou?

Tickler. Made fou?—Heavens! at Ambrose's!

[1] The translator of Schlegel's Dramatic Literature. Mr Black was a man of high character in his profession; and the London newspaper press, with which he was connected during many years, owed much of its weight to the energy and versatility of his talents. He died in 1855.

[2] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 238, note 1.

Shepherd. At Awmrose's sure aneuch. You've been sleepin this twa hours, sir, wi' your mouth wide open—and it required great forbearance no to put a half-lemon into your mouth. I would hae dune't, had ye snored—but as ye didna snore nane——

Tickler. I have awoke to all my "aitches!"

Shepherd. When you gang hame, let me recommend you to get a flannel petticoat frae ane o' the servant lassies, and wrap it roun' your chowks.[1]

Tickler. Oh! I am in great pain, James! Let me lie down on the sofa.

Shepherd. Do sae—do sae—but dinna snore nane. Weel, Mr North, what's the *bonny feedy* state o' the case, wi' what's ca'd the Question o' Catholic Emancipawtion? You dinna think it 'ill be carried or conciliated?

North. Unquestionably, James, there is a belief among certain circles that think themselves well informed, with respect to authentic rumours of intended measures of Government, that something is to be done for the Catholics in next Session of Parliament. One cannot dine out without having much sickening stuff of the sort dinned into his ears. But the nation has the Duke of Wellington's word for it—that nothing will be done for the Catholics in the next Session of Parliament.

Shepherd. Has it?

North. Yes, the Duke of Wellington said, in his simple strong style, in the House, that "if they kept quiet *perhaps* something might be done for them;" but they have not kept quiet; and, therefore, *certainly* nothing will be done for them next Parliament.[2]

Shepherd. Quiet, indeed! ay—ay—there's different kinds o' quiet, as the Duke, nae dout, kens as weel as aither you or me, Mr North.

North. True, James. The French Marshals in Spain used to keep quiet—sometimes for weeks and months at a time—but the great Lord, for all that, lay asleep in his position like a lion with his eyes open,—and on an alarm, in half-an-hour the whole British army had been in order of battle.

Shepherd. A toon coof, comin intil the kintra, and kennin o'

[1] *Chowks*—jaws.

[2] Something, however, *was* done for them next Parliament. The Catholic Emancipation Bill was passed in 1829.

coorse naething at a' aboot the symptoms o' the atmosphere, having contented himsel a' his life wi' noticin the quicksilver in his glass, and in spite o' a' its daily deceits keepit still payin the maist shamefu' deference to its authority,—a toon coof, I say, sir, coming intil the Forest, cocks his ee up to the heavens, without attendin to what airt the wind blaws frae, and prophesying a fine, clear, dry, breezy day, whustles out Ponto, and awa to the hill after the groose. The lift looked, he thocht, sae cawm, the weather sae settled! There was a cawm in heaven, nae dout—a dead cawm. But then far aff on the weather-gleam, there was a froonin, threatenin, sullen, sulky, dark, dismal, dour expression o' face in the sky—no the less fearsome 'cause o' the noo and then glimmerin out o' something like a grim ghastly smile, as if it were stifled lichtnin; ahint the cloud that noo lies black and dense on the towerin mountain, is heard first a sigh—then a groan—then a growl—then a clap—and then a rattle o' thunder, till earth shakes wi' a' her quiverin woods, and the lochs are seen tumbling a' afoam in the levin!—a deluge droons the misty hills—and doun come the hay-rucks, or the corn-stooks, wi' aiblins a human dwellin or twa—sailing alang the meadows, in which the main course o' the Tweed is lost as in a sea,—sae sudden, sae red and sae roaring is the spate, that sweeps the vale o' half its harvest, and leaves farmer, hind, and shepherd in ruin.

North. Strong as your imagery is, James, and vivid—most vivid your picture,—it is neither overcharged, nor in one point inapplicable.

Shepherd. I'm sure it's no, sir. Then let nae man tell me that seven million o' Eerishmen—for if there were sax million at the last Noctes, they'll be seven noo—will ever keep a cawm sugh—unless when they're brewin mischief. I would despise them if they did, frae the bottom o' my heart—and I'm far frae despisin the Eerish, wha, but for priests and priestcraft, would be, certes, a glorious people.

Tickler. Why, according to that rule of judgment, James, you suspect them alike, whether they are tame or tumultuous.

Shepherd. Ye maunna argue wi' me, Mr Tickler; fa' asleep—for, wi' a' your poo'rs[1] o' reasonin, I'll set ye doun, and nail your coat-tails to the chair, so as you'll no be able to get up

[1] *Poo'rs*—powers.

again, wi' the strong haun o' plain, gude, common sense. A' Eerland's under the thoombs o' the Agitawtors. Thoombs doun, and a's cawm; thoombs up, and rebellion wad wade the bogs breast-deep in blood.

North. I repeat what I have said to you, James, a hundred times within these last four years, that the Government of this country has much to answer for to civil and religious liberty on account of its shameful supineness,—must I say of a British Government—its cowardice?

Tickler. Well, then, pray is this state of things to be eternal?

Shepherd. Let me answer that, Mr North.—It will last, Mr Tickler, as lang as the Bible is a sealed book. Break the seal—let the leaves flutter free—and Superstition, blinded by the licht o' heaven, will dwine and die. She will dwine for mony years afore she dies; but, during a' that time, knowledge will be gainin head o' ignorance,—Eerishmen will be becomin mair and mair like Scotchmen and Englishmen in their character and condition,—and when the similitude grows strong and secure—for naebody wants perfect identity—then, and not till then, "something perhaps may be done for the Catholics;" and, feenally—for you maunna talk nonsense about eternity—the Roman religion will be undermined and fall, and then there will indeed be a glorious Emancipawtion.

North. Meanwhile, good heavens! what might not the Irish landlords—Protestant and Roman Catholic alike—do for their beautiful country! There are many difficulties to contend against; but I, for one, never could see any mystery in the evils that afflict Ireland. She wants an enlightened system of education;—she wants an enlightened system of employment;—she wants an enlightened system of poor-laws;—she wants an enlightened, generous, patriotic, fatherland-loving resident gentry—lords and commoners;—and with these, Erin would indeed be the Emerald Gem of the Sea!

Shepherd. What blesses ae kintra blesses anither; and o' a' blessins, what's mair blessed than a resident gentry? O that ugly sumph! that first daured to write doun in the English langage that a kintra was the better o' Absenteeism!

North. A paltry paradox, that stunk in the nostrils before it was a day old.

Shepherd. O the ugly sumph! The doctrine was an outrage on human nature, and an insult to Divine Providence!—Wad a kintra be the better if a' its clergy were non-resident in it—absentees abroad — and their duties discharged universally by proxy curates? Likewise a' its Judges? Likewise if a' partners in mercantile concerns were to leave them to the foreman, and gang ower to Boulogne to play billiards? And, to crown a', would the sumph say, that it wad be better for THE MAGAZINE, if its Editor—even yoursel, sir, Christopher North, God bless you!—were an absentee? Na, na!—that you'll never be. Easier wad it be to root up an auld oak-tree.

North. A blind, base blunder it was indeed, James; and how the owl did hoot in the sunshine, staring and winking most absurdly, with eyes made only for the twilight! What books could the sumph, as you call him, have read?—with what manner of men held converse?—that his ear had not got accustomed, in some measure, to the expression of those natural feelings and affections that bind the human heart to the *natale solum*,—feelings and affections so inevitable, that he is probably the first, and will be the last man, that ever avowed himself born without them,—insensible to their influence, or, rather, unaware of their existence!

Shepherd. Better for a kintra that a' the gentry should leeve abroad! O the sumph! But eh, sir! isna it cheerin to see and hear how suddenly a sumph's put down in Great Britain, when, wi' open jaws and lung-labouring sides, he sticks out his lang-lugged pericranium, and, reckless o' breakin the wund o' the puir harmless echoes, brays out insupportable nonsense, a' the while never doutin himsel to be ane o' the greater prophets, lifting up a warning, as in an angelic voice, unto some foolish people determined to perish in their pride —were the ass to bray on till Domesday?

North. Yes, James, the British nation are not, in the long run, by any means easily humbugged. They have their temporary follies—why not? The proprietor of "the wonderful duck" may make money for a month or so, asserting that she sings like a nightingale; but people will not pay sixpence twice to hear what, if their ears "are to be in aught believed," is neither more nor less, in tone or articulation, than—quack—quack—quack! Then, what a disgrace—what a degradation to Ireland—the land of eloquence and Burke, to have pro-

duced, in these latter days, no better demagogues than Sheil[1] and O'Connell![2]—Scrape O'Connell's tongue of blackguardism, and Sheil's of blarney, and they will be as dry as that of an old parrot.

Shepherd. I'm sure that Sheil's nae orator. Puttin politics, and the peace o' Ireland, and the cause of civil and religious liberty a' ower the world, a'thegither aside—and ane can easily do that at a Noctes——

North. With all the ease in the world, James.

Shepherd. I mysel am an agitawtor! And not only can I mak a' allowance for them, but as ae human being wi' ither human beings, I can sympatheeze, sir, frae the very bottom o' my sowl, wi' agitawtors.

North. And so can I.

Tickler (*yawning*). And—I.

[1] Sheil, born in 1791, died in 1851, at Florence, where he was the British envoy. His life has been published under the title of *Memoirs of the Right Honourable Richard Lalor Sheil*, by Torrens M'Cullagh, Esq.

[2] In one of the Noctes not written by Professor Wilson, the following graphic, and, it is believed, faithful description of the great Irish demagogue appears:—

"*North.* O'Connell, I take it for granted, has the appearance of belonging to a different order of society from Hunt and Hume.

"*Tickler.* It is natural to suppose so of a man at the head of the Dublin bar; and perhaps it may be affectation in part that renders the fact apparently so much otherwise. O'Connell is, however, cast in a clownish mould. Indeed, if I wished to let you see the difference between an Irish gentleman and an Irish raff, I don't know that I could do better than place him alongside of the Knight of Kerry. It would be about as complete in its way as a juxtaposition of Joseph Hume and Sir George Murray, or of Colonel Anson and the Blacking Man. For the very type of a mob-mystifier, however, give me nobody but Dan. He is a tall braggadocio, but so broadset that he does not seem above the middle stature. His chest is enormous; his arms are a blacksmith's; his legs a chairman's, and he bears himself, sitting, standing, or walking, with the air of a butcher. His head is a vast round mass of the true Paddy organisation, as if hewn out on purpose for Donnybrook; and the countenance all over—broad ruddy cheek, scowling unsettled brow, small wild grey eye, bland oily lips, and huge tusks of teeth—presents such a *melange* of physical vigour, animal hilarity, ferocity, craft, and fun, as, wherever you encounter it, no human being could for a moment hesitate to pronounce Milesian. He has a fine rich manly voice, and brogue worthy of the organ; and of course he possesses all the skill of a practised barrister in handling such subjects as his nature is tempted to grapple with. The ascendancy he has gained over the poor tremblers of the Treasury Bench, is such as might have been expected after a crowd of puny whipsters should have experienced the pushes and digs of a veritable *athlete* in a row of their own tempting. The circumstances, however, have done much to disgrace them. *O'Connell, Gregson, Cobbett*—these words, being interpreted, signify Mene, Tekel, Upharsin. See the book of Daniel, James."—*Noctes Ambrosianæ*, No. lvii.; *Blackwood's Magazine*, vol. xxx. p. 406.

Shepherd. Dear me, Mr Tickler! are you no asleep? But, pity me the day! when I tak up a speech o' Sheil's, howpin to get my heart made to loup like a cod in a creel; to be stung by his sharp swarming syllables into rebellion against the state, like a collie attacked by bees, and in the madness o' pain bitin his master; or rather, like a bull stung by a hornet in the flank, or a red-rag in the ee, plungin after the herds and hinds, wha a' rin helter-skelter into the wudds—or, like a teeger, or a lion, that has lain peaceably licking his paws till a man, in a hairy fur-cap, stirs him up wi' a lang pole, and gars him roar as if about to carry aff in his mouth the son o' Sir George Monro across his shouther—or like an elephant that——

North. Stop, James—stop; for Heaven's sake, stop!

Shepherd. Or like a whale that——

North. Stop, James—stop; for Heaven's sake, stop!

Shepherd. Weel, then, I wull stop. When, instead o' onything o' that sort, ae pert, pratin fribble o' a coxcomb o' a Cockney o' a paragraph follows after anither, a' as like's they can smirk or stare, brither on brither o' the same conceited family, wi' faces and voices no to be distinguished, were it no that ane seems to be greetin, and ane to be lauchin, and ane to be troubled wi' a sair cough, and ane to hae the colic, and ane to be dressed as for a bridal, and ane for a funeral—ane wi' a sodger's green coat, and ane apparelled in brown like a Quaker—yet a' the haill set equally cauldrife, formal, pedantical, and pragmatic,—and what's warse than a', and damnation to the soul o' oratory, when I see hypocrisy, meanness, truckling insincerity, cruelty, and what's akin to cruelty, political cowardice, staining all the pairts o' speech—so that when a' the paragraphs have passed aff and awa, and the orawtion is closed, you know by a feeling no to be mistaken nor mistrusted, that Sheil is after a' only a playactor, sir, who has taken to the stage by chance, idleness, or impidence, but whom Natur has barely fitted to perform even the maist inferior and subordinate characters, either in farce or tragedy; although, on the total eclipse of that sort of dramatic talent amang the Roman Catholics o' Eerland, he plays Captain Rock himself, even as in the submarine warld, in the dearth o' theatrical talent among the cetawceous tribe, ane might imagine a shrimp, to the astonishment of all other fishes, act-

ing a whale, "wallowing unwieldy enormous in his gait," from a quarter to half an inch long.

North. Charles Phillips[1] was worth a gross of Sheils. There were frequent flashes of fine imagination, and strains of genuine feeling in his speeches, that showed Nature intended him for an orator. In the midst of his most tedious and tasteless exaggerations, you still felt that Charles Phillips had a heart; that he was a fine, bold, open, generous Irishman, in whom, more especially in youth and early manhood, you are delighted with a strong dash of folly—and who is entitled, in seasons of real or pretended passion, to avail himself of the privilege of his birth, to the very verge of madness, without being thought in the least insane,—while in his more felicitous efforts, he rose fairly into the region of eloquence, and remained there on unwearied wing, either like a Glead on poise, or a Peregrine in pursuit, sufficiently long and light to prove the strength of his pinion, and the purity of his breed.

Shepherd. What's become o' Chairley Phullups?

North. In good practice at the English bar, James—and at the Old Bailey, making a fair strussle even with Adolphus,[2] who is one of the cleverest and acutest men I ever heard conduct a cross-examination, or address a jury.

Shepherd. I'm glad o' that, sir. The lad was rather flowery; but he pu'd the flowers for himsel, frae the spots where natur bade them grow—and oh! but they tell me Eerland's a flowery flowery kintra—and didna buy them in shops like Sheil, out o' green wicker-baskets set in the shade, or glass bottles wi' some water in them to enable the pinks and puppies for a few hours to struggle up their droopin heads, while to the ee o' a florist they are visibly faded frae the very first—faded, sir, and fusionless, alike destitute o' bloom and baum, and to a' intents and purposes, either o' utility or ornament, worthless as weeds.

North. When a sudden strong frost succeeds a week's wet, James, icicles make really a pretty show, as, depending from slate or thatch eaves of cot or palace, they glitter in the sunlight, with something even of the lustre of the rainbow. The eye regards with a sort of sensuous pleasure the fantastic

[1] Author of *Curran and his Contemporaries.*

[2] John Adolphus, a barrister, author of a *History of England, Biographical Memoirs of the French Revolution,* &c.: he died in 1845, aged 79. His son, J. L. Adolphus, wrote *Letters to Heber on the Authorship of Waverley,* 1821.

and fairy frostwork. But it soon is satisfied with the peg-like display of prisms, for even to the sense of sight they are cold, James — cold; we blow our fingers — on with our gloves—and leave the icicles to the admiration of schoolboys, who regard with open mouths and uplifted hands the raree-show—but who soon pass by unheeding when familiar with the dripping brotherhood, as they melt away beneath the meridian heat into the common mire of the street. Sheil's speeches are as formal and as cold as any long low level caves of icicles—and can any other quality, James, supposing it to be there, compensate for frigidity?

Shepherd. Neither man nor woman can thole frigidity. It's the death o' everything, either dangerous or delightfu'—and then, because in his case it's sae totally unexpected, its trikes a chill into the marrow o' the back-bane—comin either frae the haun or the tongue o' an Eerishman.

North. Mr Sheil is a man of education—and something, though not much, of a scholar. You have read his plays?

Shepherd. No me. Are they tragedies, comedies, or farces?

North. A sort of unintended mixture of the three, James. Occasionally rather elegant——

Shepherd. Rather elegant! Oh, sir, that's damnation to a drama! Pity me the day! An elegant tragedy! Yet aiblins no sae very elegant either, if we tak a critical look at it——

North, Perhaps not, James.

Shepherd. Just as my leddy's waitin-maid, or my leddy's milliner, whom you may hae mistaen, at a hasty glance, for my leddy hersel, is sune seen and heard through, when you begin to flirt wi' her on the outside o' a cotch.

North. The outside of a coach, James?

Shepherd. Yes, the outside of a cotch, Kit. For she's aye sae fashous[1] in pu'in her petticoats ower her coots,[2] though you're no lookin at them; and aye drawin her shawl across her breist, or rather wushin you to do that for her, though there's neither cauld nor wund; and instead o' lookin straught forrit, aye leerin unaccountably frae aneath her curls to the tae side—and every noo and then pretending to be frichtened whan ane o' the blin' leaders gies a start or a stumble, that she may press her shouther at the least again' yours—and then when she does venture to begin to speak, keeping at it

[1] *Fashous*—troublesome. [2] *Coots*—ankles.

tongue and nail, up-hill and doun-hill, the haill fifteen-mile stage, wi' an H afore every vooel to help it out, and makin use o' the maist comicallest words that are no even provincialisms, but peculiar to peculiar butlers in peculiar servants' ha's; sae that you're sair bamboozled to form a conjecture o' her meanin, and out o' pure gude breedin are under the necessity, the first overshadowin tree you come to on the road, to loot doun aneath her bannet and gie her a kiss.

North. And that somewhat amatory description of a would-be lady, you conceive, James, to answer, at the same time, for a critical dissertation on the dramatic genius of Mr Sheil.

Shepherd. I leave you to judge o' that, sir. The pictur's drawn frae natur and experience—but it's for you and ithers to mak the application, for I ne'er read a verse o' Mr Sheil's in my life; and after yon beastly abuse, in a speech o' his that has long been dead and stinkin, o' the late gude and gracious Duke o' York, whom all Britain loved—gude God! in the last stage o' a dropsy!—and a' Eerland loved too, savin and exceppin the disgustin imp himsel—confoond me gin I ever wull, though it were to save his neck frae the gallows.[1]

[1] The following extract affords a complete justification of the strong invective directed against Mr Sheil in the text; and it will be seen that, even on the admission of his biographer, his subsequent attempt to extenuate his atrocious language "was received and resented as an aggravation of the first offence":—

"At a dinner at Mullingar, on the 14th of September (1826), the chairman, Sir Richard Nagle, a young Catholic baronet, to the surprise of those assembled, gave, with complimentary preface, the health of 'the Duke of York, and may he soon learn to entertain more favourable sentiments towards the Catholics of Ireland.' Other toasts followed, Mr Sheil's health was given, and, amidst considerable excitement, he rose to return thanks. His words, as reported at the time, are as follows: 'I thank you, gentlemen, for the manner in which you have drank my health, and will say no more respecting myself. I cannot, however, allow this opportunity to pass without making a few observations upon an incident which has taken place to-night, and which calls for some comment. The chairman has given the health of the Duke of York. He has so far deviated from the course which, since the memorable anathema of his Royal Highness, has been adopted at all Liberal dinners in this country; the health of the Duke is drank in Cavan with "nine times nine." A bishop has improved upon Horace's receipt for drinking. A poet, in the paroxysm of convivial excitation, is directed to take nine cups,—

"Ternos ter cyathos attonitus petet."

But anointed Beresford is indulged in still deeper potations, and episcopal loyalty is henceforth to be estimated by multiplying nine into itself. I must be

North. With that sentiment, my dear Shepherd, all mankind will sympathise. Yet it was no outrage on the dying Duke.

Shepherd. What?

North. Sheil, as he uttered those foul execrations, was simply in the condition of a drunk street-blackguard, who, in attempting to spit in the face of some sickly gentleman well stricken in years, grew so sick with blue ruin as to spew—while a sudden blast of wind from an opposite direction blew the filth back with a blash all over his own ferocious physiognomy, forcing the self-punished brute, amidst the hootings of the half-mirthful, half-abhorring mob, to stoop staggering over the gutter, and, in strong convulsions, to empty his stomach into the common sewer.

Shepherd. Ma faith! you tauk o' my strang langage? What's a' the coorse things I ever said at the Noctes Ambrosianæ, puttin thegither, in comparison wi' that?

North. Far too mild, James. Let him or her who thinks otherwise fling Maga into the fire—from the arms of "the rude and boisterous North," fly into those of the sweet and simpering Sheil—for "rude am I in speech, and little graced with the set phrase of peace," iron would not melt in my mouth nor butter in his; yes, he is as mealy-mouthed on occasion as a flour-sack in autumn—as honey-lipped as a bee-

pardoned for observing, that it is better that we should altogether omit a toast which has become the signal of faction, and with which so many exasperating associations are connected. Yet I do not blame the chairman; he thought he was going through a mere unmeaning formula. Once, indeed, the health of the Duke of York passed like any other routine enunciation of an attachment to the reigning family; but his Royal Highness has recently contrived to attach recollections to his name which make the gorge of every genuine Irishman rise at its utterance. The chairman, however, has annexed to his health an amiable expression of his hopes that his Royal Highness may live to cherish more favourable sentiments towards one-third of the population of the British empire. Considering the character of his royal mind, it would require more time than is in all likelihood reserved to him to alter his opinions. Obstinacy is not unfrequently allied with faculties of that order which belongs to his Royal Highness. It would, at all events, take a year or so to produce this revolution in the heart and understanding of the Hero of Dunkirk; and, judging from the attendance of Sir Henry Halford upon his Royal Highness to Brighton, in the same carriage, and other incidents of the like consolatory nature, it is to be apprehended that the effect of Digitalis will not prove so sovereign as to give his Royal Highness sufficient time to correct his antipathy to Ireland. In case at any assembly of Roman Catholics his Royal Highness's health shall be hereafter proposed, instead of intimating a desire that his Royal Highness should

hive in spring. 'Yet hearken to me, James—his potato-trap—to borrow a good vulgarism of his own country, is liker the hole of a wasp's nest, when in the heat of the dog-days all the angry insects are a-swarm, all at work, heaven only knows exactly at what, but manifestly bent on mischief, and ready to bury themselves with a bizz in the hair of your head, or to sting out your eyes lost in a blue-swelling, if you so much as look at them as the yellow Shanavests[1] are robbing the hives of the beautiful industrious Orangemen the bees,—ay, just as the Catholic crew would, if they dared, rob the domiciles of the Protestants—upset, if they could, James, the great Hives of National Industry, and——

Shepherd. Murder a' the Queen Bees. There's a cleemax!

North. Do they, or do they not, seek the destruction of the Protestant Established Church in Ireland?

Shepherd. Leears, as most o' the Roman leaders are, they sometimes speak the truth—and I believe them when they say, as they have said a thousand times *coram populo*, that that will be the most glorious, the most blessed day for Ireland, which sees that Church razed to its foundation-stane, and hears the huzzas o' the seven millions mixed wi' the dusty thunder o' its overthrow.

North. Let all Protestants, therefore, who hope to hear the

change his opinions, I should beg leave, with profound submission, to suggest that the means should be substituted for the end; and in order that he may have an opportunity of modifying his opinions, that the chairman should propose "Success to Foxglove." But one word more. In the course of the evening, 'tis not improbable that we shall have got into a more pathetic mood; memories may be given, and if we should fall into any train of melancholy reminiscences, to preserve some kind of consistence, in our loyal effusions, I shall venture to propose the memory of Mrs Clarke.'

"Great indignation was expressed in various quarters, when the report of this speech appeared; and by his best friends it was condemned most strongly, as calculated to injure, not only himself, but the popular cause. In private, he confessed that it had been 'spoken under the influence of some wine,' and he could not easily be persuaded that it had provoked in high quarters sentiments of serious resentment. When forced to alter this opinion, he endeavoured in an elaborate public statement to qualify the terms originally used, and to vindicate himself from the imputation of wantonness or malignity. But it must be owned that this did not serve to mend matters. The levity with which he tried to invest the subject was censured as ill-timed, considering the Duke of York's declining state; and as he neither retracted nor repudiated the offensive phrases originally used, what was meant as an extenuation, was received and resented as an aggravation of the first offence."—*Sheil's Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 304-306.

[1] *Shanavests*—Irish rebels, or Rockites.

echoes of that consummation, vote for Catholic emancipation. Let all Protestants who venerate the holy altar of the Living Temple resist Catholic emancipation, even to the death! though, to avert that calamity, they once more must see the green shamrock—God bless it—blush red, and for a season trodden with pain under patriotic feet, torn from the foreheads of traitors and rebels.

Shepherd. What! mercy on us! ye're for fechtin—are ye, sir?

North. No, James, I am for peace; but though blustering and bullying may for a long time be despised, yet when ruffians shake their fists or flourish their shillelas in your face, or begin sharpening their pikes, James—then it is time to point with your hand to your sword—So, James—so—to recite with the alteration of one word those lines of Milton—

> "He spoke—and to confirm his words, out flew
> Millions of flaming swords drawn from the thigh
> Of Mighty Protestants!"

Shepherd. Wha spak?

North. Wellington.

Shepherd. Oh! do, my dear sir, I beseech you, tell me what can be the meanin, in a case like this, o'—— securities.

North. A man of common prudence, James—a man who was not a downright absolute born idiot, would not lend five pounds on such securities as are talked of by some politicians as sufficient to lend out upon them the dearest and most vital rights and privileges that belong to us as Protestants, to our avowed enemies the Catholics, whose religious duty it is—let frightened fools deny it, and get laughed at and murdered for their cowardly falsehoods—to overthrow Church and State. For we, James, the prime of the people of England, and Scotland, and Ireland—that is, of the Earth—*are Heretics*—that is, we love the Tree of Freedom that is planted on earth, because it is a scion from the Tree of Life that grows in heaven "fast by the Throne of God." For centuries now have we flourished beneath its shade, and been refreshed with its fruitage. But had the Roman Catholics sway, the axe would be laid to its root——

Shepherd. Mony a thump it would thole afore the bark even was chipped through o' the gnarled aik; for, wi' your permis-

sion, I change the eemage frae a fruit intil a forest tree; but then, sir, as you weel ken, the bark's——

North. Not like "the unfeeling armour of old Time——"

Shepherd. Na, sir; but like the very hide o' a man, a horse, or an elephant, protectin the beautifu' and fine vein-machinery through which the blood or the sap keeps ebbing and flowing just as mysteriously as the tides o' the great sea. For my ain pairt, I hae nae fears that a' the axes o' our enemies, lang-armed and roun'-shouthered though the race o' Eerishers be, could ever, were they to hack awa for ten thousan' years, penetrate through the outer ring o' the flint-hard wood, far less lab[1] awa nitil the heart o' the michty bole o' the Tree——

North.—

"Like a cedar on the top of Lebanon
Darkening the sea."

Shepherd. Na, na, na. For there's nae saft silly sap in the body o' the tremendous auld giant. He's a' heart, sir — and the edges o' their axes would be turned as if strucken against granite.

North. True, James—most beautifully, sublimely true!

Shepherd. Yet still an aik-tree (be thinkin o' the British Constitution, sir), though o' a' things that grow, wi' roots far down in earth, and branches high up in heaven, the maist storm-lovin and thunder-proof, depends for its verra life amaist as muckle on its outer rind as on its inner heart. Tear aff or cut through the rind, and the bole festers with funguses,[2] that, like verra cancers, keep eatin, and eatin, and eatin day and nicht, summer and wunter, into the mysterious principle o' leafy life.

North. You speak like a man inspired, James.

Shepherd. Haena ye seen, sir, and amaist grat in the solitude to see, some noble Tree, it matters not whether elm, ash, or aik, stannin sick sick-like in the forest—why or wherefore you canna weel tell—for a' roun' the black deep soil is pervious to the rains and dews, and a great river gangs sweepin by its roots, gently waterin them when it rins laigh,[3] and dashin drumly yards up the bank when it's in spate—and yet the constitution o' the tree, sir, is gane—its big branches a'

[1] *Lab*—strike.

[2] Is not Puseyism one of these here predicted funguses?

[3] *Laigh*—low.

tattery wi' unhealthfu' moss, and its wee anes a' frush as saugh-wands, and tryin in vain to shoot out their buds unto the spring—so the hawk or heron builds there nae mair—and you are willing, rather than the monarch o' the wood should thus dee o' consumption, that axes should be laid to his root, and pulleys fastened to his bole and branches, to rug him doun out o' that lang slaw linger o' dwining death, till at last, wi' ae crash no unworthy o' him, doun he comes—overwhelming hunders o' sma' saplins, and inferior stannards, and alarmin distant vales wi' the unaccountable thunder o' his fa'—no the less awfu' because lang expeckit, and leavin a gap that 'ill no be filled up for centuries—perhaps never while the earth is the earth, and wi' a' its ither trees gangs circlin round the sun, wha misses, as neist morning he rises in the east, the lang-illumined Glory!

North. Better and better still, my dear James. The bold, bluff, sea-breeze-bronzed Men of Kent, James, how their strong lungs must have crowed within their broad bosoms, to see Sheil attempting to introduce on that stage the principal part in the farce of the Fantoccini![1]

Shepherd. Oh! the puppy—Oh! the puppet!

North. A great soul in a small body—and I know some such—is a noble—yes, a noble spectacle!—for their mind triumphs over matter, or, rather, dilates the diminutive form into kindred majesty;—or, what is most likely, the shape is sunk, and we see, while we hear, only the soul.

Shepherd. That's as true a word's ever was spoken, sir. As reasonably admire a great, big, hulkin fallow wi' a wee sowl, as think o' undervaluin a man wi' a wee neat body,—or even if it's no neat—wi' a sowl fit for a giant. Never mind the size o' a man. Let him, on risin to speak, tak the advantage o' a stool, sae that his head be on a level wi' the lave, and when the fire o' genius flashes frae his een, and the flood o' eloquence frae his lips, a' the waves o' that living sea will be charmed into a caum; and whan he ceases speakin, and, jumpin aff the stool, disappears, that livin sea will hail him wi' its thunder, like fifty thousan' billows, at full tide, breakin against the beach.

[1] An anti-Catholic meeting of the men of Kent, at which Sheil attempted, but in vain, to obtain a hearing, was held at Penenden Heath in that county, in October 1828.

North. Admirable, my dear James, admirable!—But here was a puppet indeed! jerking legs and arms, and contorting nose and mouth, as if to a string, managed by Punch, or Punch's wife, beneath the platform.

Shepherd. Sputterin out amang shouts and shrieks o' involuntary lauchter—for man's by nature a lauchin animal, and that distinguishes him frae a' the beasts, no exceppin the lauchin hyena, who after a' only grunts—sentences o' a speech written a fortnight afore in Eerland!

North. Something inexpressibly ludicrous in the whole concern from beginning to end, James. The farewell to his native shores—the passage to Liverpool by steam—his approach in the mail towards London, of which that mighty metropolis lay, with all its millions, unconscious and unaware—and finally, the irresistible appearance of the ape in a cart on the Heath, with his mows and grins, and strangely accented chatter, so different from that of the same species in the Tower or Exeter 'Change[1]—the rage of the animal on being what is absurdly called insulted, that is, treated in one universal and varied roar, with the tribute felt, by sixty—or say thirty thousand Englishmen—to be due to one small Paddy, self-elected representative of the seven millions—and whom any Jack Tibbutts of a Kent yeoman could have put into his breeches-pocket, where the little orator, like the caterwauling voice of a ventriloquist suddenly thrown into your apparel, would have delivered a speech just as like the one he did from the cart, as its report in the *Sun* newspaper.

Shepherd. Haw—haw—haw! about midnight, sir, you begin to open out granly, and to wax wondrous comical. But what say ye to O'Connell?

North. Dan, again, James——

Ambrose (*entering with his suavest physiognomy*). Beg pardon, Mr North, for venturing in unrung, but there's a young lady wishing to speak with you——

Shepherd. A young lady!—show her ben.

North. An anonymous article?

Ambrose. No, sir,—Miss Helen Sandford,[2] from the Lodge.

North. Helen!—what does she want?

Ambrose. Miss Sandford had got alarmed, sir——

[1] Where wild beasts used formerly to be kept.

[2] A purely imaginary character.

Shepherd. Safe us! only look at the time-piece! Four o'clock in the mornin!

Ambrose. And has walked up from the Lodge——

North. What? Alone!

Ambrose. No, sir. Her father is with her—and she bids me say—now that she knows her master is well—that here is your Kilmarnock nightcap.

[MR NORTH *submits his head to* PICARDY, *who adjusts the nightcap.*

Shepherd. What a cowl!

North. A capote—James. Mr Ambrose,—we three must sleep here all night.

Shepherd. A' mornin ye mean. Tak care o' Tickler amang ye—but recolleck it's no safe to wauken sleepin dowgs—Oh! man! Mr North! sir! but that was touchin attention in puir Eelen. She's like a dochter, indeed.—Come awa, you auld vagabon, to your bed. I'll kick open the door o' your dormitory wi' my fit as I pass alang the transe in the mornin. The mornin! Faith I'm beginnin already to get hungry for breakfast! Come awa, you auld vagabon—come awa.

[*Exeunt* NORTH *and* SHEPHERD, *followed by the Height of* TICKLER, *to Roost.*

NORTH (*singing as they go.*)—

"Early to bed, and early to rise,
Is the way to be healthy, wealthy, and wise!"

Da Capo.

XIX.

(MARCH 1829.)

Scene I.—The Snuggery. Time,—Nine in the Evening.

NORTH *and* TICKLER.

Tickler. I paid a visit to-day, North, to a family which has something extraordinary in its constitution.

North. Ay?

Tickler. The lady of the house has been married four times, and the gentleman of the house four times; and as all the seven marriages have been productive, you may conjecture the general character of the interior.

North. What may be the population?

Tickler. Not so immense as various. I should not think it exceeds a score, from what I saw and heard, but it is most diversified.

North. Patchwork.

Tickler. The lady's first husband was a Cockney, and there are twins as like as peas, which is indeed the only description of which they are susceptible. Her second, of course, was an Irishman, to whom she bore a couple of semi-Catholic cubs—both boys—bullet-headed, and with faces like—you have seen him, I believe—that of Burke,[1] the murderer, with grim, but not ferocious expression, decisive mouth, and determined eyes and brows, which, though rather agreeable, over a glass, yet when frowning in an angry parle, or a throttling match, must have been far from pleasant. These promising youths are at present assistants to Dr Knox. Caroline then married a Highland clergyman — very far

[1] See *post*, p. 185.

north—and of that connection the fruit was three heather-legged animals, apparently of the female sex—hair not absolutely red, but foxey—fairneytickled cheeks—eyes of the colour of "three times skimmed sky-blue" milk—papa's buck teeth—what seems very unaccountable, hair-lipped all; and, though their mamma asserted smilingly that they were fine growing girls, of such a *set* shape, that I venture to affirm, that for the two last years they have grown about as much as the leg of that table. They have, however, I was given to understand, finished their education, and one of them had very nearly played us a tune on the piano. To her present lord and master, my friend, with whom I was in love a quarter of a century ago, has presented four productions, of which the one in flounced trousers, with enormous feet and legs, is said to be a girl, and the three in fancy kilts—in compliment, I suppose, to the father of the other brood—boys, but so wishy-washy that their sex seems problematical.

North. What is the total of the whole?

Tickler. Eleven—by that side of the house—in Cockneys, Irish, and Highlanders half-and-half—and in Lowlanders entire.

North. By the other side of the house?

Tickler. One Dutch girl born at the Cape—very round, and rather pretty—down-looking, and on the eve of marriage—two tall and not inelegant creatures, seemingly Chinese, but in fact by the mother's side Hindoos—and four mulattoes, of which two, boys, would look well in livery, with a cockade in their hats as captain's servants—and two, girls, would be producible on waggons in the rear of a marching regiment. It being a coarse day, the whole family were at home, sitting on chairs, and sofas, and stools, and the carpet, and what not; and I must say I never saw, North, a set of more contented creatures, or a richer scene of connubial felicity in all my life.

North. Rich?

Tickler. Their income is under three hundred a-year, and at this hour they don't owe twenty pounds.

North. You must bring the Captain, honest fellow, to the next Noctes. By the by, Tickler, we must rescind that resolution by which strangers are excluded from the Noctes.

Tickler. Let us wait till the Fiftieth Noctes—to speak grammatically, and then we shall celebrate a JUBILEE.

North. Be it so. The Noctes shall endure till all eternity; and soon as the Millennium comes, we shall bring down, by special retainer, Edward Irving.

Tickler (*after a long pause*). Come, North, none of your fits of absence. Where were you just now?

North. Meditating on my many infirmities.

Tickler. Lay your hand on your heart, North, and tell me truly what is the sin that most easily besets you—while I keep a phrenological eye on your development.

North. Personal vanity. Night and day do I struggle against it—but all in vain—Tickler.. I am an incorrigible puppy,

Tickler. I cannot deny it.

North. My happiness is in the hands of my tailor. In a perfectly well cut coat and faultless pair of breeches, I am in heaven—a wrinkle on my pantaloons puts me into purgatory—and a——

Tickler. Stop. Your language may get too strong.

North. Many a leading article have I stuck, by attempting it in tights that unduly confined the play of muscle. Last year, Scaife and Willis raised the sale a thousand, by a pair that were perfect, if ever there were a pair of perfect breeches in this sublunary world.

Tickler. Yet you never were a handsome man, Kit—never *le Beau Sabreur.*[1]

North. That may be your opinion, sir; but it was not that of the world during the last quarter of the eighteenth century. My error never lay in thinking myself a fine animal—for that I certainly was—but in feeling inordinate pleasure and pride in the possession of those personal endowments which, alas! proved fatal to so many of the most amiable of the sex; and in being too——

Tickler. The last victim of disappointed passion had certainly white teeth—but she was a lady of a very dark complexion—her lips, either for ornament or use, were to my taste by far too thick. Surely, my dear North, her hair was strongly disposed to be woolly—and, in short, pardon me for saying it, she had the universal reputation of being positively, *intus et in cute*, a negress.

North. Pshaw! But do you remember poor Alpina?

[1] The designation of Marshal Murat.

Tickler. An absolute Albino.

North. These, Tickler, were extreme cases—but, between the negress and the Albino, what infinite varieties of female loveliness had to lay their deaths at my door!

Tickler. I much doubt if any one single woman ever ate half a pound of mutton the less *per diem* on your account, taking the average of her year's dinners.

North. Would it were so! But alas! my sleep is haunted by the ghosts of——

Tickler. Never when you sleep in your easy-chair, North—else your face is an adept in falsehood—for then your features smile like those of a sleeping child during the holidays. You are then the very *beau ideal* of a happy and a harmless old gentleman.

North. What a leg, Tickler!

Tickler. Which of the two do you allude to?

North. This one—the right one—the one with the calf.

Tickler. Well—I confess I prefer the other—it is so slim—nay, so elegant in tights. But you must have had your advantage in having legs of such opposite characters; while to virgins, with downcast eyes, you had gently to put forth the leg that, ever since I knew it, looked all ankle from instep to knee-pan, an innocent-looking leg that would not harm a fly—to widows, with less timorous eyes, you could, at the same moment, exhibit the leg that, ever since I knew it, looked all calf—a dangerous leg that could trample a dragon—and thus you might bring down your bird, right and left.

North. No more impertinence, if you please, Tim. I know no purer—no higher pleasure, than to sit in full fig before a large mirror, and admire myself—my person—my body—the outer man of Christopher North. From an hour's such contemplation, I always feel that I rise up a better—a wiser—a happier man.

Tickler. No wonder.

North. Never surely was there a countenance that so happily united in its every feature the expression of moral goodness and that of intellectual grandeur. But perhaps my person is even more——

Tickler. A mere atomy. I wonder you are not afraid to sleep by yourself—you must be so like a skeleton in a shroud.

North. All living creatures, Tickler, derive their chief hap-

piness from self-admiration. Not a more complete coxcomb than a toad. He is willing to confess that he may be rather yellowish—rather tawny or so about the gills; but then what an eye in his head—so full of the fire of genius! It is not possible to look at a rat for five minutes sitting by himself on a dunghill, without being convinced that he esteems his tail one of the most captivating productions of animated nature. A pug-dog would never twist his tail so over one side of his rump, did he not live under the blessed delusion of knowing himself to be a million times more beautiful than any of Adonis' darlings that used to lick the hands of Venus. No degree of dumpiness in women is incompatible with a belief in a good figure.

Tickler. Oh, North! North! There are some truly ugly women in Edinburgh!

North. There are indeed, Tickler. Strong, bony, flat, men-like women, who walk fast and firm; look you hard in the face, God knows why, while the forehead immediately above their eyebrows is puckered up into a knot of wrinkles; their mouths unconsciously wide open——

Tickler. While all intent in scrutinising the object of their search, they totally forget all the rest of the external world, and run themselves, back front foremost, perhaps against some unlucky baker with a board of loaves on his head, which all tumble into the kennel. Why, there may perhaps be some little excuse for the ugly devils, when fascinated by such a rattlesnake as Christopher North; but what the deuce do they see in an ordinary-looking man of six feet four, like me, or what the deuce do they want with me at my time of life? I declare, North, that the very next time one of those great grey-eyed glowering gawkies opens her mouth at me in Princes Street, and selects me from all the mighty multitude of mankind, for ocular inspection, I will demand a public explanation, perhaps apology; or, should the day be warm, offer to strip on the spot, provided she will do the same, on condition, after a mutual lecture on comparative anatomy, of my ever after being suffered to pass by her and all her female relatives, without further scrutiny.

North. They positively have not the manners of modest women.

Tickler. Nor the minds of modest women.

North. You never see anything of the kind in the strangers

within our gates—in the Englishwomen who honour, by their fair and sweet presence, our metropolis. They walk along with soft and gentle, but not unobservant eyes, like ladies, and I love them all, for they are all lovable, whereas——

Tickler. Come, Kit, don't let us two sour old cynics be too severe on our countrywomen, for they make excellent wives and mothers.

North. So I am told. Wives and mothers! Alas! Tickler, our silent homes!

Tickler. Replenish. That last jug was most illustrious. I wish James were here.

North. Hush! hark! It must be he!—and yet 'tis not just the pastoral tread either of the Bard of Benger. "Alike, but oh! how different!"

Tickler. "His very step has music in't as he comes up the stair!"

Shepherd (*bursting in with a bang*). Huzzaw! Huzzaw! huzzaw!

North. God bless you, James; your paw, my dear Sus.

Shepherd. Fresh frae the Forest, in three hours——

Tickler. What? thirty-six miles?

North. So it is true that you have purchased the famous American trotter?

Shepherd. Nae trotters like my ain trotters! I've won my bate, sirs.

North. Bet?

Shepherd. Ay,—a bate,—a bate o' twenty guineas.

Tickler. What the deuce have you got on your feet, James?

Shepherd. Skites.[1] I've skited frae St Mary's Loch to the Canawl Basin in fowre minutes and a half within the three hours, without turnin a hair.

Tickler. Do keep a little further off, James, for your face has waxed intolerably hot, and I perceive that you have raised the thermometer a dozen degrees.

Shepherd (*flinging a purse of gold on the table*). It'ill require a gey strang thaw to melt that, chiels; sae tak your change out o' that, as Joseph[2] says, either in champaigne, or yill, or porter, or Burgundy, or cedar, or Glenlivet, just whatsomever you like best to drink and devoor; and we shanna be lang without supper, for in comin along the transe I shooted to

[1] *Skites*—skates. [2] Joseph Hume.

Tappytoorie forthwith to send in samples o' all the several eatables and drinkables in Picardy. I'm desperate hungry. Lowse my skites, Tickler.

[TICKLER *succumbs to unthong the* SHEPHERD'S *skates.*

Tickler. What an instep!

Shepherd. Ay, nane o' your plain soles that gang shiffle-shaffling amang the chuckystanes assassinatin a' the insects; but a foot arched like Apollo's bow when he shot the Python—heel, of a firm and decided, but unobtrusive character—and taes, ilka ane a thocht larger than the ither, like a family o' childer, or a flight o' steps leading up to the pillared portico o' a Grecian temple.

(*Enter Signor* AMBROSIO *susurrans with* IT *below his arm.*)

Shepherd. That's richt—O but Greeny has a gran' gurgle! A mouthfu' o' Millbank never comes amiss. Oh! but it's potent! (*gruing*). I wuss it be na ile o' vitrol.

North. James, enlighten our weak minds.

Shepherd. An English bagman, you see,—he's unco fond o' poetry and the picturesque, a traveller in the soft line—paid me a visit the day just at denner-time, in a yellow gig, drawn by a chestnut blude meer; and after we had discussed the comparative merits o' my poems and Lord Byron's, and Sir Walter's, he rather attributin to me, a' things considered, the superiority over baith; it's no impossible that my freen got rather fuddled a wee, for, after roosin his meer to the skies, as if she were fit for Castor himsel to ride upon up and doun the blue lift, frae less to mair he offered to trot her in the gig into Embro', against me on the best horse in a' my stable, and gie me a half-hour's start before puttin her into the shafts; when, my birses being up, faith I challenged him, on the same condition, to rin him intil Embro' on shank's naigie.[1]

North. What! biped against quadruped?

Shepherd. Just. The cretur, as sune as he came to the clear understandin o' my meanin, gied ane o' these bit creenk-lin cackles o' a Cockney lauch, that can only be forgiven by a Christian when his soul is saften'd by the sunny hush o' a Sabbath morning.

North. Forgotten perhaps, James, but not forgiven.

Shepherd. The bate was committed to black and white; and then on wi' my skites, and awa like a reindeer.

[1] *On shank's naigie*—on foot.

Tickler. What? down the Yarrow to Selkirk—then up the Tweed.

Shepherd. Na, na! naething like keepin the high-road for safety in a skiting-match. There it was—noo stretchin straught afore me, noo serpenteezin like a great congor eel, and noo amaist coilin itself up like a sleepin adder; but whether straught or crooked or circlin, ayont a' imagination sliddery, sliddery!

Tickler. Confound me—if I knew that we had frost.

Shepherd. That comes o' trustin till a barometer to tell you when things hae come to the freezin-pint. Frost! The ice is fourteen feet thick in the Loch—and though you hae nae frost about Embro' like our frost in the Forest, yet I wadna advise you, Mr Tickler, to put your tongue on the airn-rim o' a cart or cotch wheel.

North. I remember, James, being beguiled—sixty-four years ago!—by a pretty little, light-haired, blue-eyed lassie, one starry night of black frost, just to touch a cart-wheel for one moment with the tip of my tongue.

Shepherd. What a gowmeril![1]

North. And the bonny May had to run all the way to the manse for a jug of hot water to relieve me from that bondage.

Shepherd. You had a gude excuse, sir, for geein the cutty a gude kissin.

North. How fragments of one's past existence come suddenly flashing back upon——

Shepherd. Hoo I snooved alang the snaw! Like a verra curlin-stane, when a dizzen besoms are soopin the ice afore't, and the granite gangs groanin gloriously alang, as if instinct wi' spirit, and the water-kelpie below strives in vain to keep up wi' the straight-forrit planet, still accompanied as it spins wi' a sort o' spray, like the shiverin atoms of diamonds, and wi' a noise to which the hills far and near respond, like a water-quake—the verra ice itself seemin at times to sink and swell, just as if the Loch were a great wide glitterin tin-plate, beaten out by that cunnin whitesmith, Wunter,—and——

Tickler. And every mouth, in spite of frost, thaws to the thought of corned beef and greens.

Shepherd. Hoo I snooved alang! Some collies keepit geyan weel up wi' me as far 's Traquair manse—but ere I crossed

[1] *Gowmeril*—fool.

the Tweed my canine tail had drapped quite away, and I had but the company of a couple of crows to Peebles.

North. Did you dine on the road, James?

Shepherd. Didn't I tell you I had dined before I set off? I ettled at a cauker at Eddlestone—but in vain attempted to moderate my velocity as I neared the village, and had merely time to fling a look to my worthy friend the minister, as I flew by that tree-hidden manse and its rill-divided garden, beautiful alike in dew and in cranreuch!

Tickler. Helpless as Mazeppa!

Shepherd. It's far worse to be ridden aff wi' by ane's ain sowl than by the wildest o' the desert loon.

North. At this moment, the soul seems running away with the body,—at that, the body is off with the soul. Spirit and matter are playing at fast and loose with each other—and at full speed, you get sceptical as Spinoza.

Shepherd. Sometimes the ruts are for miles thegither regular as railroads—and your skite gets fitted intil a groove, sae that you can haud out ane o' your legs like an opera-dancer playin a peeryette; and on the ither glint by, to the astonishment o' toll-keepers, who at first suspect you to be on horseback—then that you may be a bird—and feenally that you must be a ghost.

Tickler. Did you upset any carriages, James?

Shepherd. Nane that I recollect. I saw severals—but whether they were coming or going—in motion or at rest, it is not for me to say—but they, and the hills, and woods, and clouds, seemed a' to be floatin awa thegither in the direction o' the mountains at the head o' Clydesdale.

Tickler. And where all this while was the bagman?

Shepherd. Wanderin, nae doubt, a' a-foam, leagues ahint; for the chesnut meer was weel cauked, and she ance won a king's plate at Doncaster. You may hae seen, Mr North, a cloud-giant on a stormy day striding alang the sky, coverin a parish wi' ilka stretch o' his spawl,[1] and pausin, aiblins, to tak his breath now and then at the meetin o' twa counties; if sae, you hae seen an image o' me—only he was in the heavens and I on the yearth—he an unsubstantial phantom, and I twal stane wecht—he silent and sullen in his flight, I musical and merry in mine——

[1] *Spawl*—shoulder.

Tickler. But on what principle came you to stop, James?

Shepherd. Luckily the Pentland Hills came to my succour. By means of one of their ridges I got gradually rid of a portion of my velocity—subdued down into about seven miles an hour, which rate got gradually diminished to about four; and here I am, gentlemen, after having made a narrow escape from a stumble, that in York Place threatened to set me off again down Leith Walk, in which case I must have gone on to Portobello or Musselburgh.

North. Well, if I did not know you, my dear James, to be a matter-of-fact man, I should absolutely begin to entertain some doubts of your veracity.

Shepherd. What the deevil's that hingin frae the roof?

North. Why, the chandelier.

Shepherd. The shandleer? It's a cage, wi' an outlandish bird in't. A pawrot, I declare! Pretty Poll! Pretty Poll! Pretty Poll!

Parrot. Go to the devil and shake yourself.

Shepherd. Heaven preserve us!—heard you ever the likes o' that?—A bird cursin! What sort o' an education must the cretur hae had? Poor beast, do you ken what you're sayin?

Parrot. Much cry and little wool, as the devil said when he was shearin the Hog.

Shepherd. You're gettin personal, sir, or madam, for I dinna pretend to ken your sex.

North. That everybody does, James, who has anything to do with *Blackwood's Magazine.*

Shepherd. True enough, sir. If it wad but keep a gude tongue in its head—it's really a bonny cretur. What plumage! What'ill you hae, Polly, for sooper?

Parrot.—

Molly put the kettle on,
Molly put the kettle on,
Molly put the kettle on,
And I shall have some punch.

Shepherd. That's fearsome—Yet, whisht! What ither vice was that speakin? A gruff vice. There again! whisht!

Voice.—

The devil he came to our town,
And rode away wi' the exciseman!

Shepherd. This room's no canny. I'm aff (*rising to go*). Mercy me! A raven hoppin aneath the sideboard! Look at

him, how he turns his great big broad head to the ae side, and keeps regardin me wi' an evil eye! Satan!

North. My familiar, James.

Shepherd. Whence cam he?

North. One gloomy night I heard him croakin in the garden.

Shepherd. You did wrang, sir,—it was rash to let him in; wha ever heard o' a real raven in a suburban garden! It's some demon pretendin to be a raven. Only look at him wi' the silver ladle in his bill. Noo, he draps it, and is ruggin at the Turkey carpet, as if he were collecktin lining for his nest. Let alane the carpet, you ugly villain.••

Raven. The devil would a wooin go—ho—ho! the wooin, ho![1]

Shepherd. Ay—ay—you hear how it is, gentlemen—"Love is a' the theme"——

Raven. "To woo his bonny lassie when the kye come hame!"

Shepherd. Satan singin ane o' my sangs! Frae this hour I forswear poetry.

Voice.—

O love—love—love,
Love's like a dizziness.

Shepherd. What! another voice?

Tickler. James—James—he's on your shoulder.

Shepherd (*starting up in great emotion*). Wha's on my shouther?

North. Only Matthew.

Shepherd. Puir bit bonny burdie! What! you're a Stirling, are you? Ay—ay—just pick and dab awa there at the hair in my lug. Yet I wad rather see you fleein and flutterin in and out o' a bit hole aneath a wall-flower high up on some auld and ruined castle standin by itsel among the woods.

Raven.—

O love—love—love,
Love's like a dizziness.

Shepherd. Rax me ower the poker, Mr North—or lend me your crutch, that I may brain sooty.

Starling.—

It wunna let a puir bodie
Gang about his bissiness.

[1] Dickens' incomparable raven in *Barnaby Rudge* would have been quite at home in this party; and appears, indeed, to have taken a lesson in household economy from North's parrot.

Parrot. Fie, whigs, awa—fie, whigs, awa.

Shepherd. Na—the bird doesna want sense.

Raven.—

The deil sat girnin in a neuk,
Riving sticks to roast the Duke.

Shepherd. Oh ho! you are fond of picking up Jacobite relics.

Raven. Ho! blood—blood—blood—blood—blood!

Shepherd. What do you mean, you sinner?

Raven. Burke him—Burke him—Burke him. Ho—Ho—Ho—blood—blood—blood!

Bronte. Bow—wow—wow.—Bow—wow—wow.—Bow—wow—wow.

Shepherd. A complete aviary, Mr North. Weel, that's a sight worth lookin at. Bronte lying on the rug—never perceivin that it's on the tap o' a worsted teegger—a raven, either real or pretended, amusin himsel wi' ruggin at the dowg's toosey tail—a pawrot, wha maun hae opened the door o' his cage himsel, sittin on Bronte's shouther—and the stirling, Matthew, hidin himsel ahint his head—no less than four irrational creturs, as they are called, on the rug—each wi' a natur o' its ain; and then again four rational creturs, as they are called, sittin round them on chairs—each wi' his specific character too—and the aught makin ane aggregate—or whole—of parts not unharmoniously combined.

North. Why, James, there are but three of the rationals.

Shepherd. I find I was countin mysel twice over.

Tickler. Now be persuaded, my dear Shepherd, before supper is brought ben, to tak a warm bath, and then rig yourself out in your Sunday suit of black, which Mr Ambrose keeps sweet for you in his own drawer, bestrewed with sprigs of thyme, whose scent fadeth not for a century.

Shepherd. Faith, I think I shall tak a plouter.[1]

[SHEPHERD *retires into the marble bath adjoining the Snuggery. The hot water is let on with a mighty noise.*

North. Do you want the flesh-brushes, James?

Shepherd (*from within*). I wish I had some female slaves, wi' wooden swurds, to scrape me wi', like the Shah o' Persia.

Tickler. Are you in, James?

[1] *A plouter*—a bathe accompanied with splashing.

Shepherd. Harken!——

[*A sullen plunge is heard as of a huge stone into the deep-down waters of a draw-well.*

North (*looking at his watch*). Two minutes have elapsed. I hope, Tickler, nothing apoplectical has occurred.

Shepherd. Blow—o—wo—ho—wro!

Tickler. Why, James,

"You are gurgling Italian half-way down your throat."

North. What temperature, James?

Shepherd. Nearly up at egg-boiling, But you had better, sirs, be makin anither jug—for that ane was geyan sair dune afore I left you—and I maun hae a glass of het-and-het as sune as I come out, to prevent me takin the cauld. I hope there's nae current o' air in the room. Wha's this that bled himsel to death in a bath? Wasna't Seneca?

North. James, who is the best female poet of the age?

Shepherd. Female what?

Tickler. Poet.

Shepherd. Mrs John Bilcy.[1] In her plays on the passions, she has a' the vigour o' a man, and a' the delicacy o' a woman. And oh, sirs! but her lyrics are gems, and she wears them gracefully, like diamond-draps danglin frae the ears o' Melpomene. The very warst play she ever wrote is better than the best o' ony ither body's that hasna kickt the bucket.

North. Yet they won't act, James.

Shepherd. They wull ack. "Count Basil" 'ill ack—and "De Montford" 'ill ack—and "Constantine" 'ill ack—and they'll a' ack.

Tickler. Miss Mitford, James?

Shepherd. I'm just verra fond o' that lassie—Mitford. She has an ee like a hawk's, that misses naething, however far aff—and yet like a dove's, that sees only what is nearest and dearest, and round about the hame-circle o' its central nest. I'm just excessive fond o' Miss Mitford.

Tickler. Fond is not the right word, James.

Shepherd. It is the richt word, Timothy—either in the het bath or out o't. I'm fond o' a' gude female writers. They're a' bonny—and every passage they write carries, as it ought to do, their feminitye alang wi't. The young gentlemen o'

[1] Joanna Baillie.

England should be ashamed o' theirsels for letting her name be Mitford. They should marry her whether she wull or no —for she would mak baith a useful and agreeable wife. That's the best creetishism on her warks.

Tickler. L. E. L.?

Shepherd. A delightfu' cretur.

Tickler. Mrs Hemans?

Shepherd. Haud your tongue, ye sinner. I see your drift, now—suggestin to my imagination a' the flower o' the female genius o' the Three Kingdoms. What? you are for drawin a pictur o' me as Apollo in the het bath surrounded wi' the Muses? That would be a fine subject for Etty.

North. Isn't his "Judith and Holofernes," my dear Shepherd, a noble, a majestic performance?

Shepherd. Yon's colourin! Judith's richt leg's as flesh-like as my ain noo lyin on the rim o' the bath, and amaist as muscular.

Tickler. Not so hairy, though, James.

Shepherd. That's worse. You think you hear the heroine's prayer or invocation. The energy in that bonny fair straught arm comes direct frae Heaven. That swurd is not for a murder, but for a sacrifice. In those upraised eyes methinks I see reluctance to shed blood giving way to the holy resolve to set her country free frae the oppressor. Her face is somewhat pale — for Judith in her widowhood, amang the shades o' her rural retirement, was a lover o' pensive peace; but her dead husband's spirit stood before her in a dream, and inspired her to go to the camp before the city, and by one great and dreadfu' deed to render her name immortal in national sang. What matronly majesty in that swelling bosom, which the enamoured giant was not suffered with one touch to profane! Pure as stern she stands amid the golden cups drained by that Warrior-wassailer—in another moment to "be red, but not with wine;" when, like lightning descending from heaven, that sword shall smite him in his sleep through the spouting spine—and methinks I see, at morning dawn, the fires o' liberty sun-kindled, and glintin gloriously on all the city towers.

North. Bravo! James.

Shepherd. I'm geyan weel sodden noo, and I think I'll come out. Ring the bell, sir, for my black claes.

North. I have been toasting your shirt, James, at the fire. —Will you come out for it?

Shepherd. Fling't in at the door. Thank you, sir. Ho! here's the claes, I declare, hingin on the tenters. Is that sooper comin in? Noo, I'm rubbed down—ae stockin on—anither—noo, the flannen drawers—and noo, the breeks.—Oh! but that turkey has a gran' smell! Mr Awmrose, ma slippers! Noo for't.

(*The* SHEPHERD *reappears, in full sables, blooming like a rose.*

North. Come away, my dear Shepherd. Is he not, Tickler, like a black eagle that has renewed his youth?

[*They take their seats at the Supper-table.—Mulligatawny—Roasted Turkey—Fillet of Veal—Soles—a Pie—and the Cold Round—Potatoes—Oysters, &c. &c. &c. &c. &c.*

North. The turkey is not a large one, James, and after a thirty-six miles' run, I think you had better take it on your plate.

Shepherd. Na, na, sir. Just set the ashet afore me—tak you the fillet—gie Tickler the pie—and noo, let us hae some discourse about the fine airts.

Tickler. The Opposition[1] is strong this season—reinforced by Etty, Linton, and Martin.

North. But how came you, James, to see the "Judith," having only arrived within the hour in Edinburgh?

Shepherd. Ask no questions, and you'll hear tell no lies. I hae seen her, as my description pruves. As to the "Deluge," yon picture's at first altogether incomprehensible. But the langer you glower at it, the mair and mair intelligible does a' the confusion become, and you begin to feel that you're looking on some dreadfu' disaster. Phantoms, like the taps o' mountains, grow distincter in the gloom; and the gloom itsel, that at first seemed clud, is noo seen to be water. What you thocht to be snawy rocks, become sea-like waves, and shudderin, you cry out, wi' a stifled vice, "Lord preserve us, if that's no the Deluge!"—Mr Tickler, dinna blaw the froth o' your porter in my face.

Tickler. Beg your pardon, James,—*Perge.*

[1] In consequence of some schism among the painters there were two Exhibitions at this time in Edinburgh.

Shepherd. But whare's a' the folk? That canna be them—that huddle o' specks like flocks o' sheep driven to and fro by the tempests! It is! The demented survivors o' the human race a' gathered together on ledges o' rocks, up, up, up, ae ledge aboon anither, a' frowning o'er the brink o' Eternity. That's even waur than the decks o' a veshel in shipwreck. Gang nearer the pictur—and there thousan's on thousan's o' folk broken out o' Bedlam a' mad!—and nae wonder,—for yon's a fearsome moon, a' drenched in blood, in conjunction wi' a fiery comet, and there's lichtnin too splinterin the crags till they topple doun on the raging multitude o' men and women mixed wi' horses and elephants, and lions roarin in their fear—antediluvian lions, far far bigger than the biggest that ever since fought in a Roman amphitheatre, or are at this moment lying with their mouths atween their paws in the sands o' Africa.

Tickler. Why, James, you are not unlike a lion yourself just now growling over the carcass of a young buffalo. Shall I ring for another turkey?

Shepherd. Mind your ain pie, sir. Here's to you—What yill! Berwick is the best of brewers in Britain.

North. Linton's "Return of a Victorious Armament" is splendid; but it is pure imagination. His architecture is not to my eye Grecian. It is too lofty and too light.

Tickler. But what a glorious dream, North! And the triumphal pageant glides majestically along, beneath those aerial pillars, and piles, and domes, and temples, and pure celestial clime—fit dwelling for heroes and demigods.

Shepherd. Mind your pie, sir, and dinna imitate me in speakin as weel as in eatin.

Tickler. 'Tis a noble ambition, James, to emulate your excellence in either.

Shepherd. But then, sir, your natural capacity is greater for the ane than the ither.

North. But what think you, James, of our own artists this year?

Shepherd. Just very muckle. But let us no particulareeze, for fear o' geein offence, or doin injustice to men o' genius. Baith Institutions are capital; and if you were gude for onything, you would write an article o' thirty pages on them, when you would hae scope——

North. Perhaps I may, for next Number. Meanwhile, shall we clear decks?

Shepherd. Did you ever see sic a preparation o' a skeleton o' a turkey? We maun send it to the College Museum, to staun in a glass-case aside Burke's.

North. What did you think, James, of the proceedings of these two Irish gentlemen?[1]

Shepherd. That they were too monotonous to impress the imagination. First ae drunk auld wife, and then anither drunk auld wife—and then a third drunk auld wife—and then a drunk auld or sick man or twa. The confession got unco monotonous—the Lights and Shadows o' Scottish Death want relief—though, to be sure, poor Peggy Paterson, that Unfortunate, broke in a little on the uniformity; and sae did Daft Jamie; for whilk last murder, without ony impiety, ane may venture to say, the Devil is at this moment ruggin that Burke out o' hell-fire wi' a three-pronged fork, and then in wi' him again, through the ribs—and then stirring up the coals wi' that eternal poker—and then wi' the great bellows blawin up the furnace, till, like an Etna, or Mount Vesuvius, it vomits the murderer out again far ower into the very middle o' the floor o' the infernal regions.

Tickler. Whisht—whisht—James!

Shepherd. Nae system o' divinity shuts mortal mouths against such enormous monsters. I am but a worm. We are all worms. But we crawl in the licht o' heaven; and God has given us voices to be lifted up from the dust, when horrid guilt loosens our tongues; and the moral sense, roused by religion, then denounces, without misgivings, the curse o' heaven on the hell-doomed soul o' the Atheistic murderer. What forbids?

North. Base blind superstition, in the crimes of the creature forgetful of the laws of the Creator. Nothing else.

Shepherd. Was he penitent? If sae, I abhor my words.

North. Impenitent as a snake—remorseless as a tiger. I

[1] Burke and his paramour Mrs Macdougal, and Hare and his wife, were tried in Edinburgh in 1829, for an extensive series of murders, perpetrated for the purpose of supplying an anatomical school with *subjects;* which they did without challenge, and at a sufficiently remunerating price. Burke was executed: the others escaped,—Hare having kept his neck out of the noose by turning king's evidence. The sentiments expressed in the text are not one whit overcharged.

studied, in his cell,[1] his hard, cruel eyes, from whose lids had never dropped the tear

"That sacred pity had engender'd,"—

his hardened lips, which ruth never touched nor moved from their cunning compression—his voice rather soft and calm, but steeped in hypocrisy and deceit—his collected and guarded demeanour, full of danger and guile—all, all betrayed, as he lay in his shackles, the cool, calculating, callous, and unrelenting villain. As the day of execution drew near, his anxiety was often—I am told by those who saw him, and marked him well—manifest in his dim or darkened countenance—for the felon's throat felt in imagination the suffocating halter; but when that dream passed off, he would smile—nay laugh—and inly exult in his series of murders, so long successfully perpetrated—and the bodies of the slaughtered still carried to a ready market—prompt payment without discount—eight or ten pounds for a corpse, and whisky cheap!—so that murderers, and those about to be murdered, might all get speedily fuddled, and drunk together—and then the hand on the mouth and throat—a few gasps and convulsions—and then corpse after corpse huddled in among straw, or beneath chaff-beds, or into herring-barrels—then into tea-chests—and off to the most unsuspicious and generous of surgeons that ever gave a bounty on the dead for the benefit of the living.

Shepherd. Was he a strong fallow, Burke?

North. No, a neat little man of about five feet five, well proportioned, especially in his legs and thighs—round-bodied, but narrow-chested—arms rather thin—small wrists, and a moderate-sized hand—no mass of muscle anywhere about his limbs or frame—but vigorously necked—with hard forehead and cheek-bones—a very active, but not a powerful man—and intended by nature for a dancing-master. Indeed he danced well—excelling in the Irish jig—and when working about Peebles and Inverleithen he was very fond of that recreation. In that neighbourhood he was reckoned a good specimen of the Irish character—not quarrelsome—expert with the spade—and a pleasant enough companion over a jug of toddy.

[1] I accompanied Professor Wilson on the occasion when he visited the murderers and murderesses in their cells, and I can testify to the perfect fidelity of his description.

Nothing repulsive about him, to ordinary observers at least—and certainly not deficient in intelligence. But he "had that within which passeth show"—"there was a laughing devil in his eye," James—and in his cell he applied in my hearing over and over again the words "humane man," to those who had visited him, laying the emphasis on *humane*, with a hypocritical tone, as I thought, that showed he had not attached its appropriate meaning to the word, but used it by rote like a parrot—

Shepherd. Safe us! what like was Hare?

North. The most brutal man ever subjected to my sight—and at first look seemingly an idiot. His dull, dead, blackish eyes, wide apart, one rather higher up than the other, his large, thick, or rather coarse-lipped mouth—his high, broad cheek-bones, and sunken cheeks, each of which when he laughed—which he did often—collapsed into a perpendicular hollow, shooting up ghastlily from chin to cheek-bone—all steeped in a sullenness and squalor not born of the jail, but native to the almost deformed face of the leering miscreant—inspired not fear, for the aspect was scarcely ferocious, but disgust and abhorrence—so utterly loathsome was the whole look of the reptile! He did not look so much like a murderer as a resurrectionist—a brute that would grope in the grave for the dead rather than stifle the living—though, to be sure, that required about an equal degree of the same kind of *courage* as stifling old drunk women, and bedridden old men, and helpless idiots—for Daft Jamie was a weak creature in body, and though he might in sore affright have tumbled himself and his murderer off the bed upon the floor, was incapable of making any effort deserving the name of resistance.

Shepherd. Was he no sorry and ashamed, at least, for what he had dune?

North. No more than if he had killed so many rabbits. He was ready to laugh, and leer, and claw his elbow, at every question put to him which he did not comprehend, or in which he thought he heard something funny. His sleep, he said, was always sound, and that he "never dreamed none;" he was much tickled by the question, "Did he believe in ghosts?" or "Did he ever see any in the dark?" and gobbled out, grinning all the while a brutal laugh, an uncouth expression of contempt for such foolery—and then muttering "thank God"

—words he used more than once—callously, and sullenly, and vacantly as to their meaning, he thought—"that he had done nought to be afeared for;" his dialect being to our ears a sort of slovenly mixture of the "lower than the lowest" Irish, and the most brutelike of the most sunken "Coomberland."[1]

Shepherd. Hark ye, sir,—ane likes to hear about monsters—Was Hare a strang Deevil Incarnate?

North. Not very. Sluggish and inert—but a heavier and more muscular man above than Burke. He prided himself, however, on his strength, and vaunted that he could lift five sixty-fives, by his teeth, fastened to a rope, and placed between his knees. But it was easy to see he lied, and that the anecdote was but a trait of vanity;—the look he had in all things of an abject, though perhaps quarrelsome coward—and his brows and head had scars of wounds from stone or shillela, such as are to be seen on the head and brows of many a brutal craven.

Shepherd. Did ye see their leddies?

North. Poor, miserable, bony, skinny, scranky, wizened jades both, without the most distant approach to good-lookingness, either in any part of their form, or any feature of their face — peevish, sulky, savage, and cruel, and evidently familiar, from earliest life, with all the woe and wretchedness of guilt and pollution—most mean in look, manner, mind, dress—the very dregs of the dregs of prostitution. Hare has most of the she-devil. She looked at you brazen-facedly, and spoke with an affectedly plaintive voice, "gentle and low, an excellent thing in woman," and held her yellow, "yammering" infant (the image of its father) in her arm—in prison we saw her—as if it were a bundle of rags—but now and then looking at it with that species of maternal fondness with which impostors sit on house-steps, staring at their babies, as if their whole souls yearned towards them—while no sooner have you passed by, than the angry beggar dashes its head, to make it cry better, against the pavement.

Tickler. Prodigious nonsense, James, was written in the newspapers about the "dens" of the monsters. Burke's room was one of the neatest and snuggest little places I ever

[1] Although Hare had no moral, yet he had physical sensibilities. I remember he complained sorely of "the cold"—the season being winter, and the windows of his cell unglazed.

saw—walls well plastered and washed—a good wood-floor—respectable fireplace—and light well-paned window, without a single spider's web. You reached the room by going along a comfortable, and by no means dark passage, about fifteen feet long—on each side of which was a room, inhabited, the one by Mrs Law, and the other by Mr and Mrs Connoway. Another short passage (with outer and inner door of course) turned off into the dwelling of Mr Burke—the only possible way of making it a room by itself—and the character of the whole flat was that of comfort and cheerfulness to a degree seldom seen in the dwellings of the poor. Burke's room, therefore, so far from being remote or solitary, or adapted to murder, was in the very heart of life, and no more like a den than any other room in Edinburgh—say that in which we, who murder nobody, are now sitting at supper. Neither was any other murder than that of "t' ould woman" there perpetrated. Yet Sir Walter Scott, it was said, declared that, with all his wonderful imagination, he could picture to himself nothing so hideous. Sir Walter is not given to compliment his own imagination so—and if ever he saw the room, must have approved of it as a room of a very comfortable but commonplace and unpretending character.

Shepherd. But isna Hare's house a dreadfu' place? I howp it is, sir?

North. It is at the bottom of a close—and I presume that one house must always be at the bottom of a close—but the flat above Hare's dwelling was inhabited,—and two of his apartments are large and roomy—well fitted for a range of chaff-beds, but not particularly so for murder. A small place, eight feet or ten by four or five, seems to have been formed by the staircase of another dwelling and the outer wall, and no doubt, were murder committed there, it would seem a murderous place. But we have slept in such a place fifty times, without having been murdered—and a den, consisting of two large rooms, with excellent fireplaces and windows, and one small one, is not, to our apprehension, like the den of a fox or a wolf—nor yet of a lion or a tiger. The house outside looks like a minister's manse.—But I am getting tedious and wearisome, James!

Shepherd. No you. But let us change the subject a wee —— I howp, sirs, you baith went to the hanging?

North. We intended to have assisted at that ceremony, and had taken tickets in one of the upper boxes; but the morning was raw and rainy, so we let the fiend wing away into perdition, without any visible or audible testimony of our applause.

Shepherd. The congregation behaved maist devootly.

Tickler. Like Christians, James. Burke, it seems, was told to give the signal with the name of his Saviour on his lips!· But the congregation, though ignorant of that profanation, knew that the demon, even on the scaffold, endured neither remorse nor penitence; and therefore natural, and just, and proper shouts of human vengeance assailed the savage coward, and excommunicated him from our common lot by yells of abhorrence that delivered his body over to the hangman, and his soul to Satan.

Shepherd. Yet a puir senseless, heartless driveller in the *Courant*, I observed, writing for a penny a line, sympatheezed with the Throttler, and daured to abuse that pious congregation as a ferocious mob. Yea, the pitiful hypocrite absolutely called bloody Burke "their victim"!!

Tickler. The whining cur deserved to be half-hanged for his cant, and resuscitated to his senses in Dr Knox's shambles. That congregation of twenty thousand souls was the most respectable ever assembled at an execution—and had they stood mute at a moment when nature demanded they should salute the monster with curses both loud and deep, they would have been traitors to the trust confided to every human heart, and brutally insensible to the "deep damnation of *their* taking off," whom week after week "the victim" had smothered with those fingers now clutched in prayer, forsooth—but at home and free from awkwardness only when engaged in murder; and then uniting a delicacy with a strength of touch decisively indicative of the hand of a master.

Shepherd. Independently o' a' ye hae sae weel said, sir, only think o' the satisfaction o' safety to the whole city—a selfish but unco natural satisfaction—in riddance o' the monster. Had he no been found out, wha michtna hae been Burked, Hared, Macdougal'd, and Knoxed, during the current year?

North. James Hogg, to a dead certainty.

Shepherd. Poo! Puir folk thocht o' themselves in the fate

o' the saxteen corpses—o' their fathers and mithers, and aiblins idiot brithers or sisters—and therefore they hissed and shouted, and waved their haun̄s and hats aboon their heads, as soon as the carcass o' the ruffian blackened on the scaffold.

Tickler. And the beautiful and eternal fitness of things was exemplified to their soul's full desires, in the rope dangling over his organ of destructiveness—

North. In the knot fastened—I was glad to hear—behind his neck to keep him in pain—

Shepherd. In Hangy's allooing him only three inches o' a fa'—

Tickler. In the funny fashion of his nightcap—put on between eight and nine in the morning, when other people have taken theirs off—

Shepherd. And, feenally, in that consummating swing, "here we go round about, round about"—and that drawin up o' the knees, that tells death's doure—and the labour o' the lungs in agony, when you can breathe neither through mouth nor nostrils, and a' your inside is workin like a barmy barrel.

North. Did the *Courant* idiot expect that the whole congregation were to have melted into tears at the pathetic appearance of "their victim"? The Scottish people—and it was an assemblage of the Scottish people—are not such slaves of the hour. They will not suffer the voice of deep-abhorring nature to be stifled within them by the decencies due to a hideous man-monster under the hands of the hangman. Priests may pray, and magistrates may beckon—as in duty bound; but the waves of the sea "flowed not back when Canute gave command;" and, in spite of clerical and lay authorities, the people behaved in every way worthy of their national character.

Shepherd. Then think o' sympathy, sir, workin in the power o' antipathy — twenty thousand sowls a' inflamed wi' ae passion — and that passion eye-fed even to gloatin and gluttony by the sicht o' "their victim." O sirs! hoo men's sowls fever through their een! In love or hate——

Tickler. I am credibly informed, James, that several blind men went to *see* Burke hanged.

Shepherd. That was real curious. They had kent intuitively, you see, that there was to be tremendous shootin.

They went to *hear* him hanged. But what for hadna ye a lang article embracin the subject?

North. The Edinburgh newspapers, especially the *Mercury* and *Chronicle*, were so powerful and picturesque, that really, James, nothing was left for me to say; besides, I did not see how I could with propriety interfere with the wish to hang Hare, or any one else implicated in the sixteen murders; and, therefore, during law proceedings, meditated or attempted, I kept mute. All these being now at an end, my mouth may be unsealed; but, at present, I have really little to say on the sixteen subjects.

Shepherd. Weel, let's hear that little.

North. First and foremost, the Lord Advocate,[1] and the Sheriff,[2] and all the lawyers of the town, did their duty thoroughly and fearlessly; and so did all the lawyers for the prisoner,—Messrs Moncrieff, Cockburn, M'Neill, Robertson, and others; and so did the Jury. The Jury might, with safe conscience, have found Macdougal guilty; but with a safe conscience, they found the libel in her case, *Not Proven*. They did what, on the whole, was perhaps best.

Shepherd. I dout that.

Tickler. So do I.

North. So perhaps did they; but let her live. Death is one punishment, Life another. In admitting Hare to be king's evidence, the Lord Advocate did that which alone could have brought Burke to the gallows. Otherwise, the whole gang would have escaped, and might have been at murder this very night. In including the three charges in one indictment, his Lordship was influenced solely by that feeling for the prisoners which a humane and enlightened man may entertain even for the most atrocious criminal, consistently with justice. Their counsel chose otherwise, and the event was the same. The attempt to try Hare, at first appeared to me infamous; but in that I showed my ignorance, for Mr Sandford made out a strong case; but Mr M'Neill's[3] masterly argument was irresistible, and the decision of the Judges entirely right—although I do not say that the view of the law so ably given by Lords Alloway and Gillies was wrong. As to any wish

[1] Sir William Rae. [2] Sheriff Duff.

[3] Afterwards (in 1852) Lord Justice General, and President of the Court of Session.

in any quarter to shape the proceedings so as to shield Dr Knox, that idea is mere childishness and absurdity, and fit only for the old women whom Burke and Hare did not murder.

Shepherd. I'm glad to hear o' that, sir; and since you say't, it maun be true. But what o' Dr Knox?

North. The system established and acted on in the dissecting-rooms of that anatomist is manifestly of the most savage, brutal, and dreadful character. It is allowed by all parties, that not a single question was ever put—or if ever, mere mockery—to the wretches who came week after week with uninterred bodies crammed into tea-chests—but that each corpse was eagerly received, and fresh orders issued for more. Nor is there any reason to believe, but every reason to believe the contrary, that had the murderers brought sixty instead of sixteen murdered corpses, they would not have met an instant market.

Shepherd. Fearsome—fearsome!

Tickler. We shall suppose, then, that not a shade, however slight, of suspicion ever crossed Dr Knox's mind, or the minds of his assistants. What follows? That they knew that the poorer inhabitants of Edinburgh were all of them not only willing, but most eager to sell the bodies of their husbands, wives, brothers, and sisters, and sweethearts, and relations in general; for if these two miscreants could, in little more than eight months, purchase from off the deathbed sixteen corpses, pray how many might have been purchased in that time by a sufficient number of agents? Unless the practice of selling the dead were almost universal, and known by Dr Knox and his assistants to be so, uninterred body after uninterred body brought to them thus must have struck them with surprise and astonishment.

Shepherd. That's conclusive, sir.

North. How, in the nature of things, could Burke and Hare have been believed endowed with an instinct that led them to sixteen different houses in eight months, where the inmates were ready to sell their dead to the doctors? Did Dr Knox and his assistants believe that these two wretches were each like a vulture—

> "So scented the Grim Feature, and upturn'd
> His nostril wide into the murky air,
> Sagacious of his quarry from afar,"—

that they dropped in at every sick-room, and sounded the sitters by the dying bed, to know if they were disposed, in the event of death, for a few pounds to let the corpse be crammed into a tea-chest, and off to the doctors?

Shepherd. I canna say; but they can best answer the question themsels——

North. Ay, and they shall be made to answer the question, *for the subject shall be probed to the bottom*,—nor shall either fear or favour hinder me from spreading the result all over Europe.

Shepherd. Ay, America, and Asia, and Africa too——

North. The Edinburgh newspapers have spoken out manfully, and Dr Knox stands arraigned at the bar of the public, his accuser being—Human nature.

Shepherd. Of what is he accused?

North. He is ordered to open his mouth and speak, or be for ever dumb. Sixteen uninterred bodies—for the present I sink the word murdered—have been purchased, within nine months, by him and his, from the two brutal wretches who lived by that trade. Let him prove, to the conviction of all reasonable men, that it was impossible he could suspect any evil,—that the practice of selling the dead was so general as to be almost universal among the poor of this city—and that he knew it to be so—and then we shall send his vindication abroad on all the winds of heaven.

Tickler. Does he dare to presume to command all mankind to be mute on such a series of dreadful transactions! Does he not know that he stands, at this hour, in the most hideous predicament in which a man can stand—in that of the *suspected* accomplice or encourager of unparalleled murderers?

North. If wholly and entirely innocent, he need not fear that he shall be able to establish his innocence. Give me the materials, and I will do it for him;—but he is not now the victim of some wild and foolish calumny; the whole world shudders at the transactions; and none but a base, blind, brutal beast can at this moment dare to declare, "Dr Knox stands free from all suspicion of being accessory to murder."

Shepherd. Your offer to vindicate him is like yourself, sir,—and 'tis like yourself to utter the sentiments that have now flowed from your fearless lips.

North. If innocent, still he caused those murders. But for the accursed system he and his assistants acted on, only two

or three experimental murders would have been perpetrated,—unless we must believe that other—nay, all other lecturers would have done as he did, which, in my belief, would be wickedly to libel the character of our anatomists.

Shepherd. Is't true that his class received him, in consequence of these horrid disclosures, with three cheers?

North. Though almost incredible, it is true. But that savage yell within those blood-stained walls, is no more to the voice of the public, than so much squeaking and grunting in a pig-sty during a storm of thunder. Besides, many of those who thus disgraced themselves and their human nature, were implicated in the charge; and instead of serving to convince any one, out of the shambles, of their own or their lecturer's innocence, it has had, and must have had, the very opposite effect—exhibiting a ruffian recklessness of general opinion and feeling on a most appalling subject as yet altogether unexplained, and, as many think, incapable of any explanation that will remove from the public mind, even in its calmest mood, the most horrible and damning suspicions. The shouts and cheers at Burke's appearance on the scaffold, were right—human nature being constituted as it is; but the shouts and cheers on Dr Knox's appearance at the table where so many of Burke's victims had been dissected, after having been murdered, were "horrible, most horrible," and calculated—whatever may be their effect on more thinking minds—to confirm in those of the populace the conviction that they are all a gang of murderers together, and determined to insult, in horrid exultation, all the deepest feelings of humanity—without which a people would be a mob more fierce and fell than the concentrated essence of the Burkes, the Hares, and the Macdougals.

Shepherd. Ae thing's plain—that whatever may be the case wi' ither anatomists, here or elsewhere, Dr Knox at least has nae right to ca' on the legislature for some legal provision for the procurin o' dead bodies for dissection. The legislature, on the ither hand, has a better right to ca' on him for a revision o' the laws regulatin his ain system. Some writers, I see, blame the magistrates o' Edinburgh, and some the poleish,[1] and some the London Parliament House, for a' thae murders—but I canna help blamin, especially, Burke and Hare—and neist to them Dr Knox and his assistants. Nacbody believes

[1] *Poleish*—police.

in ghosts in toons, but everybody believes in ghosts in the kintra. Let either Hare or Knox sleep a' nicht in a lanely wood, wi' the wund roarin in the tap branches o' the pines, and cheepin in the side anes, and by skreich o' day he will be seen flyin wi' his hair on end, and his een jumpin out o' their sockets, doun into the nearest toon, pursued, as he thinks, by saxteen ghaists a' in a row, wi' Daft Jamie[1] at their head, caperin like a paralytic as he was, and lauching like to split, wi' a mouth drawn a' to the ae side, at the doctor or the doctor's man, distracted at the sicht o' sae mony spirits demandin back their ain atomies.

North. It is an ugly business altogether, James; far worse than the Chaldean MS.

Shepherd. Ah! you deevil!

Tickler. Hollow, North, into the ear of Dionysius, that Ambrose may appear like a spirit, and sweep away *reliquias Danaum.*

North. Man is the slave of habit. So accustomed have I been to pull this worsted bell-rope, that I never remember the ear. Ambrose! Ambrose! *Ho iero!*

(*Enter* SIGNOR AMBROSIO.)

Tickler. Picardy, wheel out, and wheel in.

[PICARDY *and* SIR DAVID GAM *wheel out the oblong Supper-Table through the Folding-doors, and the Circular Glentilt Marble Slab into a warmer climate.*

Shepherd. In another month, sirs, the Forest will be as green as the summer sea rolling in its foam-crested waves in moonlight. You maun come out—you maun baith come out this spring.

North. I will. Every breath of air we draw is terrestrialised or etherealised by imagination. Our suburban air, round about Edinburgh, especially down towards the sea, must be pure, James; and yet, my fancy being haunted by these easterly haurs,[2] the finest atmosphere often seems to me afloat with the foulest atoms. My mouth is as a vortex, that engulfs all the stray wool and feathers in the vicinity. In the country, and nowhere more than on the Tweed or the Yarrow, I inhale always the gas of Paradise. I look about me for flowers, and I see none—but I feel the breath of thousands. Country

[1] Daft Jamie, a well-known idiot, was one of their victims.

[2] *Haur*—a chill, foggy, easterly wind.

smoke from cottages or kilns, or burning heather, is not like town smoke. It ascends into clouds on which angels and departed spirits may repose.

Shepherd. O' a' kintra soun's, which do you like best, sir?

North. The crowing of cocks before, at, and after sunrise. They are like clocks all set by the sun. Some hoarsely scrauching, James—some with a long, clear, silver chime—and now and then a bit bantam crowing twice for the statelier chanticleer's once—and, by fancy's eye, seen strutting and sliding up, in his impudence, to hens of the largest size, not unaverse to the flirtation of the feathery-legged coxcomb.

Shepherd. Few folk hae seen oftener than me Natur gettin up i' the mornin. It's no possible to help personifyin her first into a goddess, and then into a human——

Tickler. There again, James.

Shepherd. She sleeps a' nicht in her claes, yet they're never runkled; her awakening face she turns up dewy to the sun, and Zephyr wipes it wi' his wing without disturbin its dreamy expression; never see ye her hair in papers, for crisp and curly, far-streamin and wide-wavin are her locks, as alternate shadows and sunbeams dancin on the dancin music o' some joyous river rollin awa to the far-aff sea; her ee is heaven—her brow the marbled clouds; and after a lang doun-gazing, serene, and spiritual look o' hersel, breathin her orison-prayers, in the reflectin magic o' some loch like an inland ocean, stately steps she frae the East, and a' that meet her—mair especially the Poet, wha draps doun amid the heather in devotion on his knees—kens that she is indeed the Queen of the whole Universe.

Tickler. Incedit Regina.

North. Then, what a breakfast at Mount Benger, after a stroll to and fro' the Loch! One devours the most material breakfast spiritually; and none of the ethereal particles are lost in such a meal.

Shepherd. Ethereal particles! What are they like?

North. Of the soul, James. Wordsworth says, in his own beautiful way, of a sparrow's nest—

> "Look, five blue eggs are gleaming there!
> Few visions have I seen more fair,
> Nor many prospects of delight
> More touching than that simple sight!"

But five or six, or perhaps a dozen, white hen-eggs gleaming there—all on a most lovely, a most beautiful, a most glorious round white plate of crockery—is a sight even more simple and more touching still.

Tickler. What a difference between caller eggs and caller haddies!

North. About the same as between a rural lassie stepping along the greensward, like a walking rose or lily endued with life by the touch of a fairy's wand, and a lodging-house Girrzzie laying down a baikie[1] fu' o' ashes at the mouth of a common stair.

Shepherd. North, you're a curious cretur.

Tickler. You must excuse him—for he is getting into his pleasant though somewhat prosy dotage.

Shepherd. A' men begin to get into a kind o' dotage after five-and-twunty. They think theirsels wiser, but they're only stupider. The glory o' the heaven and earth has a' flown by; there's something gane wrang wi' the machinery o' the peristrephic panorama, and it 'ill no gang roun'—nor is there ony great matter, for the colours hae faded on the canvass, and the spirit that pervaded the picture is dead.

Tickler. Poo, poo, James. You're haverin.

North. Do you think, my dear James, that there is less religion now than of old in Scotland?

Shepherd. I really canna say, sir. At times I think there is even less sunshine; at least, that a' that intensely bricht kind o' heavenly licht that used to wauken me in the mornings when a boy, by dancin on my face, is extinct, or withdrawn to anither planet; and yet reason serves to convince me that the sun canna be muckle the waur o' ha'in been shining these forty last years o' his life, and that the faut maun lie in the pupil o' the iris o' my twa auld hazy een;—neither can I see cause why dewdraps and blaeberries should be less beautifu' than o' yore, though certain sure they seem sae; and warst o' a', the faces o' the fairest maidens, whether in smiles or in tears, seem noo-a-days to want that inexpressible spirit o' joy or grief—a loveliness breathed on them from climes and regions afar—that used to gar my heart quake within me whenever I came within the balm o' their breath or the waving o' their hair,—yet I wad fain believe, for the sake o' the

[1] *Baikie*—a kind of scuttle for ashes.

Flowers o' the Forest, that rapt youth still sees the beauty that some film or other now veils from my eyes.

Tickler. Hem!

Shepherd. And which they must see nevermore, till after the shades o' death they reopen with renovated power in heaven. Auld folk, I remember in my youth, were aye complainin o' some great loss—some total taking away—some dim eclipse—just as we, sirs, aften do now; then I lauched to hear them, but now I could amaist weep! Alas! even memory o' the Trysting Hour is but a dream of a dream! But what a dream it was! I never see "a milk-white thorn" without fa'in into a strange swoon o' the soul, as if she were struggling to renew her youth, and swarfed awa in the unavailing effort to renew the mysterious laws o' natur.

North. I fear there is less superstition now, James, in the peasant's heart than of old—that the understanding has invaded the glimmering realms of the imagination.

Shepherd. Tak ony religious feeling, and keep intensifying it by the power o' solitary meditation, and you feel it growin into a superstitious ane—and in like manner get deeper and deeper into the heart o' the mystery o' a superstitious ane, and you then discover it to be religious! Mind being nursed in matter must aye be superstitious. Superstition is like the gloom round a great oak-tree. Religion is like the tree itsel—darkenin the earth wi' branches growin by means o' the licht o' heaven.

North. I fear Christianity, James, is too often taught merely as a system of morals.

Shepherd. That's the root o' the evil, sir, where there is evil in Scotland. Such ministers deaden, by their plain, practical preaching, the sublimest aspirations of the soul—and thus is the Bible in the poor man's house often "shorn of its beams." There is mair sleepin in kirks noo than of old—though the sermons are shorter—and the private worship throughout a' the parish insensibly loses its unction aneath a cauldrife moral preacher. Many fountains are shut up in men's hearts that used to flow perennially to the touch o' fear. It's a salutary state aye to feel ane's sel, when left to ane's sel, a helpless sinner. How pride hardens a' the heart! and how humility saftens it! till like a meadow it is owerrun wi' thousands o' bonny wee modest flowers—flock succeeding

flock, and aye some visible, peepin ever through the winter snaws!

North. I fear, James, that a sort of silly superficial religion is diffusing itself very widely over Edinburgh.

Shepherd. Especially, which is a pity, over the young leddies, who are afraid to wear feathers on their heads, or pearlins on their bosoms—sae great is the sin o' adornin the flesh.

North. The self-dubbed evangelicals are not very consistent on that score, James—for saw ye ever one of the set to whom nature had given good ankles that did not wear rather shortish petticoat; or one gummy, that did not carefully conceal her clumsiness alike from eye of saint and sinner?

Shepherd. Puir things! natur will work within them—and even them that forsakes the warld, as they ca't, hae a gude stamach for some of the grossest o' its enjoyments, sic as eatin and drinkin, and lyin on sofas, or in bed a' day, in a sort o' sensual doze, which they pretend to think spiritual—forsakin the warld, indeed!

North. I never yet knew one instance of a truly pretty girl forsaking the world, except, perhaps, that her hair might have time to grow, after having been shaven in a fever—or——

Shepherd. Or a sudden change of fashion, when she couldna afford to buy new things, and therefore pretended to be unusually religious for a season—wearyin a' the time for the sicht o' some male cretur in her suburban retirement, were it only for the face o' the young baker wha brings the baps in the mornin wi' a hairy cap on—or o' some swarth Italian callant wi' a board o' images.

Tickler. Yes—religious ladies never recollect that eating for the sake of eating, and not for mere nourishment, is the grossest of all sensualities. It never occurs to them that in greedily and gluttonously cramming in fat things down their gratified gullets, they are at each mouthful virtually breaking all the ten commandments.

North. All washed over with ale and porter.

Shepherd. Into ane stamach like the Dead Sea. Maist nauseous!

Tickler. Salmon, hodge-podge, pease and pork, goose and apple-sauce, plum-pudding, and toasted cheese, all floating in

a squash of malt in the stomach of an evangelical young lady, who has forsaken the world!

Shepherd. There's nae denying that maist o' them's gutsy. But the married evangelical leddies are waur than the young anes; for they egg on their husbands to be as great gluttons as themselves; and I've seen them noddin and winkin, and makin mouths to their men, that sic or sic a dish was nice and fine, wi' the gravy a' the while rinnin out o' the corners o' their mouths; or if no the gravy, just the natural juice o' their ain palates waterin at the thocht o' something savoury, just as the chops o' Bronte there water when he sits up on his hinder end, and gies a lang laigh yowl for the fat tail o' a roasted leg o' mutton.

North. In youngish evangelical married people, who have in a great measure forsaken the world, such behaviour makes me squeamish, and themselves excessively greasy over their whole face; so greasy, indeed, that it is next to a physical impossibility to wash it, the water running off it as off oilskin.

Tickler. Byron it was, I think, who did not like to see women eat. Certainly I am so far an Oriental, that I do not like to see a woman eat against her husband, as if it were for a wager. Her eyes, during feed, should not seem starting from their sockets; nor the veins in her forehead to swell in sympathy with her alimentary canal; nor the sound of her grinders to be high; nor loud mastication to be followed by louder swallow; nor ought she, when the "fames edendi" has been removed, to gather herself up like mine hostess of the Hen and Chickens, and giving herself a shake, then fold her red-ringed paws across her well-filled stomach, and give vent to her entire satisfaction in a long, deep, pious sigh, by way of grace after meat.

North. The essence of religion is its spirituality. It refines—purifies—elevates all our finer feelings, as far as flesh and blood will allow.

Shepherd. Oh! it's a desperate thing that flesh and blude! Can you, Mr North, form ony idea o' the virtue o' a disembodied, or rather o' an unembodied spirit—a spirit that never was thirsty, that never was hungry, that never was cauld, that never was sick, that never felt its heart loup to its mouth (how could it?) at the kiss o' the lips o' a young lassie sittin in the same plaid wi' you, on the hill-side, unmindfu' o' the

blashing sleet, and inhabiting, within thae worsted faulds, the very heart o' balmy paradise?

North. It must be something very different, at any rate, James, from the nature of an evangelical lady of middle age, and much rotundity, smiling greasily on her greasy husband, for another spoonful of stuffing out of the goose; and while engaged in devouring him, ogling a roasted pig with an orange in its mouth, the very image of a human squeaker of an age fit for Mr Wilderspin's infant school.

Tickler. Infant schools! There you see education driven to absurdity that must soon sicken any rational mind.

North. What can we know, Tickler, about infants? "He speaks to us who never had a child."

Shepherd. But I have had mony, and I prophesy, that in three years there shall not be an infant school in all Scotland. Nae doubt, in great towns it might often be of great advantage to children and parents, that the bit infants should be better cared for and looked after than they are, when the parents are at work, or necessarily from home. But to hope to be able to do this permanently, on a regular system of infant schools, proves an utter ignorance of human feelings, and of the structure of human society. It is unnatural, and the attempt will soon fall out of the hands of weak enthusiasts, and expire.

North. It is amusing, James—is it not?—to see how ready an evangelical young lady is to marry the first reprobate who asks her—under the delusion of believing that she is rich.

Tickler. But she first converts him, you know.

Shepherd. Na, na. It's him that converts her—and it's no ill to do. If she really hae cash—say a thoosan' poun'—madam asks few questions—but catches at the captain. There is an end then o' her Sunday schools, and her catechysings, and her preachin o' the word. She flings aff the hypocrite, and is converted into the bauld randy-like wife o' a subaltern officer in the grenadier company o' an Eerish regiment; flauntin in a boyne-like bannet in the front-row o' a box in the theatre—unco like ane o' the hizzies up in the pigeon-holes, and no thinkin shame to lauch at dooble-entendres! Ithers o''them, again, mak up to weak young men o' a serious turn and good income; marryin some o' them by sly stratagem, and some by main force.

North. But of them all alike, without one single exception, the aim—with various motives—is still the same—marriage.

Tickler. Come, come, Kit, not all—I know to the contrary.

North. All the self-dubbed evangelicals. For love, or for money, they are all eager to marry at a week's notice,—and they are all of them ready to jump at an offer, on to a very advanced period of mortal existence. From about fifty on to sixty-five, they are still most susceptible of the tender passion—rather than not have a husband, they will marry

"Toothless bald decrepitude,"

as I have known in many instances—and absolutely pretend to get sick in company a month or two after the odious event—as if they were as "ladies wish to be who love their lords," and about, ere long, to increase the number of Mr Wilderspin's infant scholars! What a contrast does all this present to the character and conduct of the true and humble Christian—mild, modest, unpretending.

Shepherd. And always, without exception, beautifu'; for the hameliest countenance becomes angelical when overspread for a constancy with the spirit of that religion that has "shown us how divine a thing a woman may be made!"

Tickler. I see her sitting—serene, but not silent—her smiles frequent, and now and then her sweet silvery laugh not unheard—in a dress simple as simple may be, in unison with a graceful elegance that Nature breathed over "that lady of her own."

North. I forget her name, my dear friend—you mean Lucy?

Tickler. Whom else in heaven or on earth?

Shepherd. Ay—there are thousan's on thousan's o' Lucys, who walk in their innocence and their happiness beneath the light of Christianity, knowing not how good they are, and in the holy inspiration o' Nature doing their duty to God and man, almost without knowing it, so sublime a simplicity is theirs.

North. Of theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Shepherd. Nae backbiting—nae envy—nae uncharitableness—nae exaggeration o' trifles—nae fear o' the face o' the knave o' spades at an innocent game o' cards, played to please some auld leddy that in the doze o' decent dotage canna do

without some amusement or ither that requires little thocht, but waukens up some kindlins o' aimless feeling—nae fear, and but sma fondness for dancin, except when she's gotten a pleasant partner—a cretur that doesna start at shadows, because she walks in licht—that kens by thinkin on her ain heart what in this tryin life should be guarded against in tremblin, and what indulged in withouten reproach—a lassie that doesna eternally keep rinnin after new preachers, but sits in the same pew in the same kirk—an angel——

Tickler. "Like heavenly Una with her milk-white lamb," in the light of whose beauty her father's house rejoiceth, and is breathed over by a shade of sadness only for a few weeks after she has been wafted away on the wings of love to bless the home of a husband, won more by the holy charm of her filial affection than even by the breath of the sighs that poured forth her speechless confession on his own bosom fast beating to the revelation of her virgin love.

Shepherd. That's no sae ill expressed, sir, for an auld bachelor; but the truth is, that in the course o' life a' the best capacities o' human feeling expand themselves out into full growth in the bosom o' a gude man, even under the impulses o' imagination, just the same as if he had had a real wife and weans o' his ain; and aiblins, his feelings are even mair divine from being free o' the doundraught o' realities; idealeezed as it were by love rejoicin in its escape from the thraldom o' necessity.

North. James, you always speak such poetry at our Noctes that I grieve you write it now so seldom or never.

Shepherd. Perhaps I hae written my best; and bad as that may be, my name will have a sort of existence through the future in the Forest. Won't it, sir?

North. No fear of that, James.

Shepherd. Then I am satisfied.

Tickler. I hardly understand the nature of the desire for posthumous fame.

Shepherd. Nor me neither. But the truth is, I understand naething. That I love to gaze on a rose and a rainbow, and a wallflower on a castle, and a wreath o' snaw, and a laverock in the lift, and a dewy starnie, and a bit bonny wee pink shell, and an inseck dancin like a diamond, and a glimmer o' the moon on water, be it a great wide Highland loch, or only

a sma' fountain or well in the wilderness.—and on a restless wave, and on a steadfast cloud, and on the face o' a lisping child that means amaist naething, and on the face o' a mute maiden that means amaist everything,—that I love to gaze on a' these, and a thousan' things beside in heaven and on earth that are dreamt of in my philosophy, my beatin heart tells me every day I live; but the why and the wherefore are generally hidden frae me, and whenever I strive for the reason, my soul sinks away down and down into a depth that seems half air and half water, and I am like a man drownin in a calm, and as he drowns, feelin as if he were descendin to the coral palaces o' the mermaids, where a' things are beautifu' but unintelligible, and after wanderin about awhile under the saftly-looming climat, up again a' at ance into the everyday world, in itself, o' a gude truth, as beautifu' and unintelligible too as any warld in the heavens above or in the waters underneath the earth.

North. Posthumous fame!

Shepherd. What's mair nor ordinar extraordinar[1] in that? We love our kind, and we love our life—and we love our earth—and we love oursels. Therefore, being immortal creatures, we love the thocht of never being forgotten by that kind, and in that life, and on that earth. We all desire, we all hope, to be held in remembrance for a shorter or a langer time—but only them that has done, or said, or sung something imperishable, extend that desire into a limitless future—coexisting with our warks,—when they perish, we perish too, and are willing to perish. But be so gude as tell me, sir, what's the preceese meanin o' the word posthumous, or rather how it comes to mean "after you are dead"?

Tickler. All poets should die young.

Shepherd. No great poet ever died young that I heard tell o'. All the great ancient poets o' Greece, I am tauld, leeved till they were auld chiels—

North. Homer and Pindar (eh?) and Æschylus, and Sophocles, and Euripides.

Shepherd. And a' the great English poets either lived to be auld men, or reached a decent time o' life—say fifty and six, and threescore and ten; as to Richard West and Chatterton, Young Beattie, and Michael Bruce, and Kirke White, and John

[1] *Mair nor ordinar extraordinar*—more than usually extraordinary.

Keats, and others, they were a' fine lads, but nane o' them a' gied symptoms of ever becomin great poets, and better far for their fame that they died in youth. Ony new poets sprutin up, sir, amang us, like fresh daisies amang them that's withered? Noo that the auld cocks are cowed, are the chickens beginning to flap their wings and craw?

Tickler. Most of them mere poultry, James.

North. Not worth plucking.

Shepherd. It's uncomprehensible, sir, to me altogether, what that *something* is that ae man only, amang many million, has, that makes him poetical, while a' the lave remain to the day o' their death prosaic? I defy you to put your finger on ae pint o' his mental character or constitution in which the secret lies—indeed, there's aften a sort o' stupidity about the cretur that maks you sorry for him, and he's very generally laucht at;—yet, there's a superiority in the strain o' his thochts and feelings that places him on a level by himsel aboon a' their heads; he has intuitions o' the truth, which, depend on't, sir, does not lie at the bottom of a well, but rather in the lift o' the understanding and the imagination—the twa hemispheres; and knowledge, that seems to flee awa frae ither men the faster and the farther the mair eagerly it is pursued, aften comes o' its ain sweet accord, and lies doun at the poet's feet.

North. Just so. The power of the soul is as the expression of the countenance—the one is strong in faculties, and the other beautiful in features, you cannot tell how—but so it is, and so it is felt to be, and let those not thus endowed by nature, either try to make souls or make faces, and they only become ridiculous, and laughing-stocks to the world. This is especially the case with poets, who must be made of finer clay.

Tickler. Generally cracked—

Shepherd. But transpawrent—

Tickler. Yea, an urn of light.

Shepherd. I'm beginnin to get verra hungry just for ae particular thing that I think you'll baith join me in—pickled sawmont. Ay, yonder it's on the sideboards; Mr Tickler, rise and bring't, and I'll do as muckle for you anither time.

[TICKLER *puts the Circular Slab to rights, by means of pre-existing materials for a night only. They all fall to.*

North. James, I wish you would review for Maga all those fashionable Novels—Novels of High Life; such as *Pelham*—the *Disowned*——

Shepherd. I've read thae twa, and they're baith gude. But the mair I think on't, the profounder is my conviction that the strength o' human nature lies either in the highest or lowest estate of life. Characters in books should either be kings, and princes, and nobles, and on a level with them, like heroes; or peasants, shepherds, farmers, and the like, includin a' orders amaist o' our ain working population. The intermediate class—that is, leddies and gentlemen in general—are no worth the Muse's while; for their life is made up chiefly o' mainners — mainners—mainners;—you canna see the human creturs for their claes; and should ane o' them commit suicide in despair, in lookin on the dead body, you are mair taen up wi' its dress than its decease.

Tickler. Is this Tay or Tweed salmon, James?

Shepherd. Tay, to be sure—it has the Perthshire accent, verra pallateable. These leddies and gentlemen in fashionable novels, as in fashionable life, are aye intrig—trig—triguin — this leddy with that ane's gentleman, and this gentleman with that ane's leddy, — then it's a' fund out through letters or key-holes, and there's a duel, and a divorce, and a death, the perpetual repetition o' which, I confess, gets unco wearisome. Or the chief chiel in the wark is devoted to cairts and dice—and out o' ae hell—as they rightly ca' gamblin-houses — intil anither — till feenally, as was lang ago foreseen, he blaws out his brains wi' a horse-pistol, a bit o' the skull stickin in the ceilin. This too gets tiresome, sirs — oh! unco tiresome — for I hae nae desire to hear onything mair about gamblers, than what ane sees noo and then in the police reports in the newspapers. There is something sae essentially mean and contemptible in gamblin, that no deep interest can ever be created for ony young man under such a passion. It's a' on account o' the siller; and I canna bring mysel to think that the love o' money should ever be the foundation-stane, or rather key-stane o' the arch o' a story intended for the perusal o' men o' moral and intellectual worth. Out he flees like a madman frae ane o' the hells, because he's ruined, and we are asked to pity him—or tak warnin by him — or something o' that sort, by way o' moral;

but had he won, why another would have lost; and it is just as well that he should loup into the Thames wi' stanes in his pouches, as him that held the wonnin haun;—but, to speak plain, they may baith gang to the deevil for me, without excitin ony mair emotion in my mind than you are doin the noo, Tickler, by puttin a bit o' cheese on your forefinger, and then by a sharp smack on the palm, makin the mites spang into your mouth.

Tickler. I was doing no such thing, Hogg.

Shepherd. North, wasna he?—Puir auld useless body! he's asleep. Age will tell. He canna staun[1] a heavy sooper noo as he used to do—the toddy tells noo a hantle faster[2] upon him, and the verra fire itself drowzifies him noo intil a dwawm —na, even the sound o' ane's vice, lang continued, lulls him noo half or haill asleep, especially if your talk like mine demands thocht—and there indeed, you see, Mr Tickler, how his chin fa's doun on his breast, till he seems—but for a slight snore—the image o' death. Heaven preserve us—only listen to that! Did ye ever hear the like o' that? What is't? Is't a musical snuff-box? or what is't? Has he gotten a wee fairy musical snuff-box, I ask you, Mr Tickler, within the nose o' him; or what or wha is't that's playin that tune?

Tickler. It is indeed equally beautiful and mysterious.

Shepherd. I never heard "Auld Langsyne" played mair exactly in a' my life.

Tickler. "List—O list! if ever thou didst thy dear father love!"

Shepherd (*going up on tiptoes to Mr North, and putting his ear close to the old gentleman's nose*). By all that's miraculous, he is *snoring "Auld Langsyne!"* The Eolian harp's naething to that—it canna play a regular tune—but there's no a sweeter, safter, mair pathetic wund-instrument in being than his nose.

Tickler. I have often heard him, James, snore a few notes very sweetly, but never before a complete tune. With what powers the soul is endowed in dreams!

Shepherd. You may weel say that.—Harkee! he's snorin't wi' variations! I'm no a Christian if he hasna gotten into "Maggy Lauder." He's snorin a medley in his sleep!

[TICKLER *and the* SHEPHERD *listen entranced.*

Tickler. What a spirit-stirring snore is his "Erin-go-bragh!"

[1] *Staun*—stand. [2] *A hantle faster*—a good deal faster.

Shepherd. A' this is proof o' the immortality o' the sowl. Whisht—whisht! [NORTH *snores* "*God save the King.*" Ay—a loyal pawtriot even in the kingdom o' dreams! I wad rather hear that than Catalan, in the King's Anthem. We maun never mention this, Mr Tickler. The warld 'ill no believe't. The warld's no ripe yet for the belief o' sic a mystery.

Tickler. His nose, James, I think, is getting a little hoarse.

Shepherd. Less o' the tenor and mair o' the bass. He was a wee out o' tune there—and I suspeck his nose wants blawin. Hear till him noo—"Croppies, lie doun," I declare;—and see how he is clutchin the crutch.

[NORTH *awakes, and for a moment like goshawk stares wild.*

North. Yes—I agree with you—there must be a dissolution.

Shepherd. A dissolution!

North. Yes—of Parliament. Let us have the sense of the people. I am an old Whig—a Whig of the 1688.

Tickler and *Shepherd.* Hurraw, hurraw, hurraw! Old North, old Eldon, and old Colchester, for ever! Hurraw, hurraw, hurraw!

North. No. Old Eldon alone! Give me the Dolphin. No. The Ivy-Tower. No need of a glass. Let us, one after the other, put the Ivy-Tower to our mouth, and drink him in pure Glenlivet.

Shepherd. On the table!

[*The* SHEPHERD *and* TICKLER *offer to help* NORTH *to mount the table.*

North. Hands off, gentlemen. I scorn assistance. Look here!

[NORTH, *by a dexterous movement, swings himself off his crutch erect on the table, and gives a helping hand first to the* SHEPHERD *and then to* TICKLER.

Shepherd. That feat beats the snorin a' to sticks! Faith, Tickler, we maun sing sma'. In a' things he's our maister. Alloo me, sir, to gang doun for your chair?

North (*flinging his crutch to the roof*).—OLD ELDON!

[*Tremendous cheering amidst the breakage by the descending crutch.*

Bronte. Bow, wow, wow—wow, wow—wow, wow, wow.

(*Enter* PICARDY *and Tail in general consternation.*)

Shepherd. Luk at him noo, Picardy—luk at him noo!

Tickler. Firm on his pins as a pillar of the Parthenon.

Shepherd. Saw ye ever a pair o' strauchter, mair sinewy legs, noo that he leans the haill wecht o' his body on them; ay, wi' that outstretched arm he stauns like a statue o' Demosthenes, about to utter the first word o' ane o' his Philippics.

[BRONTE *leaps on the table, and stands by* NORTH'S *knee with a determined aspect.*

North. Take the time from Bronte—OLD COLCHESTER!

Bronte. Bow, wow—wow, wow—wow, wow, wow.

[*Loud acclamations.*

Shepherd. Come, let's dance a threesome reel.

North. Picardy—your fiddle.

[MR AMBROSE *takes "Neil Gow" from the peg, and plays.*

Shepherd. Hadna we better clear decks——

North. No—James. In my youth I could dance the ancient German sword-dance, as described by Tacitus. Sir David, remove the Dolphin. I care not a jot for the rest of the crystal.

[NORTH, TICKLER, *and the* SHEPHERD *thrid a threesome reel*—BRONTE *careering round the table in a Solo*—PICARDY'S *bow-hand in high condition.*

Shepherd. Set to me, sir, set to me—never mind Tickler. Oh! but you're matchless at the Heelan fling, sir.—Luk at him, Mr Awmroso!

Ambrose. Yes, Mr Hogg.

Shepherd. I'll match him against a' the Heelans—either in breeks or out o' them—luk, luk—see him cuttin!

[MR NORTH *motions to* PICARDY, *who stops playing, and with one bound leaps from the centre of the circular, over the Ivy-Tower to the floor.* SHEPHERD *and* TICKLER, *in attempting to imitate the great original, fall on the floor, but recover their feet with considerable alacrity.*

North (*resuming his chair*). The Catholic Question is not carried yet, gentlemen. Should it be, let it be ours to defend the Constitution.

Shepherd. Speak awa, sir, till I recover my breath. I'm sair blawn. Hear Tickler's bellows.

Tickler (*stretching his weary length on a sofa*). Whew—whew—whew. [*Exit* PICARDY *with his Tail.*

North. Mr Peel seems to have made a *hit* in the chief character of Sheil's play—"The Apostate."

Tickler. Whew—whew—whew.

North. I confess I had no expectations of seeing that play

revived; still less of such a star as Robert Peel being prevailed upon to accept of such a miserable part.

Shepherd. It'ill no gang doun lang—they'll be hissing him, some day, aff the stage.

North. From the commencement of his career have I regarded Robert Peel with pleasure and with pride; and when it does happen that an old man's heart has warmed towards a young one, it is not easy to chill the kindly glow—it is more difficult, it would seem, to change sentiments than opinions.

Shepherd. I heard twa-three whalps the ither day braggin, "Noo, we'll see *Blackwood's Magazine* makin a wheel;" but I gied them the lee direck in their teeth, and they were mum.

North. Blackwood's Magazine may make a wheel, when the sun makes a wheel in heaven—and from his meridian tower runs back eastward.

Shepherd. The chariot o' Apollo reistin[1] on the hill!

North. Oxford must not—must not re-elect Robert Peel.[2] Let her pity—forgive—if she can, respect—nay, admire him still—but let her not trust the betrayer.

Shepherd. And must we say gude-nicht—without ha'in ance mentioned that name that wont to set the table in a roar—a roar o' glorying gratitude—to him wha——

North. THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON! What! in solemn silence?

Tickler. Solemn—but not sullen—North.

North. May my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth—or wag in mumbling palsy—if ever my breath seek to stain the lustre of that glorious name. He saved England.

Shepherd. Dinna put on that kind o' face, I beseech you, sir. The expression o't is sae incomprehensible, that I know not whether to howp or fear for my country.

North. We who never feared must hope. Oh! I could prophesy!

Shepherd. So could I, for that matter; but I hate to look into clouds and darkness.

[1] *Reistin*—backing, through the restiveness of the horses.

[2] Peel, the Home Secretary, who, up to this time, had been a staunch anti-Catholic member of Parliament, at length yielded to the pressure, and carried the Catholic Emancipation Act in 1829. In consequence of this step he resigned his seat for the University of Oxford, and was not re-elected by that body.

Tickler. Let us swear to meet this day month—Shall the Popish Association put down the Government? And may not the Protestant Association restore the State?

North. It might—it may..

Shepherd. Oh! My dear sir, my imagination kindles when I look on your bald forehead. It would be as easy to *turn you round* as an auld oak-tree,—na, not so easy, for Sir Henry Steuart o' Allanton,[1] wi' his machinery, could turn roun' an auld oak-tree, but no a' the powers o' earth, wi' a their machinery, could screw you a hair's-breadth roun' frae the position on which you hae taken your staun; as sune turn roun' a rock-built tower, to face the settin instead o' the risin sun.

North. My dear James, you are too partial to the old man.

Shepherd. I speak the sense o' the nation. You are Abdiel grown auld, but faithful as in youth—still the dauntless angel.

North. One bumper at parting—

THE KING!

AND MAY HE NEVER FORGET THOSE PRINCIPLES WHICH SEATED HIS FAMILY ON THE THRONE OF THESE REALMS!

[*Endless cheering, and then Exeunt Omnes.*

[1] The author of a work entitled *The Planter's Guide; or, A Practical Essay on the best method of giving immediate effect to wood, by the removal of large trees and underwood.* It was reviewed by Sir Walter Scott in the *Quarterly Review* of March 1828.

XX.

(APRIL 1829.)

Scene I.—The Snuggery. Time,—Eight o'clock. The Union-Table, with Tea and Coffee Pots, and the ODoherty China-set —Cold Round—Pies—Oysters—Rizzards—Pickled Salmon, &c. &c. &c. A How-towdie whirling before the fire over a large basin of mashed Potatoes. The Boiler on. A Bachelor's Kitchen on the small Oval. A Dumb Waiter at each end of the Union.

NORTH *and* SHEPHERD.

Shepherd. This I ca' comfort, sir. Everything within oursel—nae need to ring a bell the leeve-lang night—nae openin o' cheepin, nae shuttin o' clashin doors—nae trampin o' waiters across the carpet wi' creakin shoon—or stumblin, clumsy coofs, to the great spillin o' gravy—but a' things, eatable and uneatable, either hushed into a cozy calm, or——

North. Now light, James, the lamp of the Bachelor's Kitchen with Tickler's card, and in a quarter of an hour, minus five minutes, you shall scent and see such steaks!

Shepherd. Only look at the towdie,[1] sir, how she swings sae granly roun' by my garters, after the fashion o' a planet. It's a beautiful example o' centrifugal attraction. See till the fat dreep-dreepin intil the ashet o' mashed potawtoes, oilifying the crusted brown intil a mair delicious richness o' mixed vegetable and animal maitter! As she swings slowly twirlin roun', I really canna say, sir, for I dinna ken, whether baney back or fleshy breist be the maist temptin! Sappy baith!

[1] *Towdie* or *how-towdie*—a barn-door fowl.

North. Right, James—baste her—baste her—don't spare the flour. Nothing tells like the dredge-box.

Shepherd. You're a capital man-cook, sir.

North. For plain roast and boil, I yield to no mortal man. Nor am I inconsiderable shakes at stews. What a beautiful blue magical light glimmers from that wonder-working lamp, beneath whose necromancy you already hear the sweet low bubble and squeak of the maturing steak! Off with the lid, James. [SHEPHERD *doffs the lid of the Bachelor's Kitchen.*

Shepherd. What a pabblin![1] A' hotchin, like the sea in a squall, or a patfu' o' boilin parritch! What a sweet savour! Is 't na like honeysuckle, sir, or sweet-briar, or broom, or whuns, or thyme, or roses, or carnations? Or rather like the scent o' these a' conglomerated thegither in the dewy mornin air, when, as sune as you open the window, the haill house is overflowin wi' fragrance, and a body's amaist sick wi' the sweet, warm, thick air, that slowly wins its way, like palpable balm, arm-in-arm wi' the licht that waukens the yellow-billed blackbird in her nest amang the cottage creepers, or reopens the watchful een o' her neighbour, the bonny spotted mavis! Let's pree 't. [SHEPHERD *tastes.*

North. Ay—I could have told you so. Rash man, to swallow liquid and solid fire! But no more spluttering. Cool your tongue with a caulker.

Shepherd. That lamp's no canny. It intensifies hetness intil an atrocity aboon natur. Is the skin flyped aff my tongue, sir? [SHEPHERD *shows tongue.*

North. Let me put on my spectacles. A slight incipient inflammation, not worth mentioning.

Shepherd. I howp an incipient inflammation's no a dangerous sort?

North. Is that indeed the tongue, my dear James, that trills so sweetly and so simply those wild Doric strains? How deeply, darkly, beautifully red! Just like a rag of scarlet. No scurf—say rather no haze around the lambent light. A rod of fire—an arrow of flame. A tongue of ten thousand, prophesying an eagle or raven life.

Shepherd. I aye like, sir, to keep a gude tongue in my head, ever since I wrote the Chaldee Mannyscripp.[2]

[1] *Pabblin*—bubbling up.

[2] See Preface, vol. i. p. xvi.

North. Humph!—No more infallible mark of a man of genius, James, than the shape of his tongue. It is uniformly long, so that he can shoot it out, with an easy grace, to the tip of his nose.

Shepherd. This way?

North. Precisely so. Fine all round the edge, from root to tip—underneath very veinous—surface in colour near as may be to that of a crimson curtain shining in setting sunlight. But the tip—James—the tip——

Shepherd. Like that o' the serpent's that deceived Eve, sir—curlin up and doun like the musical leaf o' some magical tree——

North. It is a singular fact with regard to the tongue, that if you cut off the half of it, the proprietor of the contingent remainder can only mumble—but cut it off wholly, and he speaks fully better than before——

Shepherd. That's a hanged lee.

North. As true a word as ever I spoke, James.

Shepherd. Perhaps it may, sir, but it's a hanged lee, nevertheless.

North. Dish the steaks, my dear James, and I shall cut down the how-towdie.

[NORTH *and the* SHEPHERD *furnish up the Ambrosial tables, and sit down to serious devouring.*

North. Now, James, acknowledge it — don't you admire a miscellaneous meal?

Shepherd. I do. Breakfast, noony,[1] denner, four-hours,[2] and sooper, a' in ane. A material emblem o' that spiritual substance, *Blackwood's Magazine!* Can it possibly be, sir, that we are twa gluttons?

North. Gluttons we most assuredly are not; but each of us is a man of good appetite. What is gluttony?

Shepherd. Some mair stakes, sir?

North. Very few, my dear James, very few.

Shepherd. What's gluttony?

North. Some eggs?

Shepherd. Ae spoonfu'. What a layer she wad hae been! O but she's a prolific cretur, Mr North, your how-towdie! It's necessary to kill heaps o' yearocks,[3] or the haill kintra

[1] *Noony*—luncheon. [2] *Four-hours*—tea. [3] *Yearocks*—chickens.

wad be a-cackle frae John o' Groat's House to St Michael's Mount.

North. Sometimes I eat merely as an amusement or pastime —sometimes for recreation of my animal spirits—sometimes on the philosophical principle of sustenance—sometimes for the mere sensual, but scarcely sinful, pleasure of eating, or, in common language, gormandising—and occasionally, once a-month or so, for all these several purposes united, as at this present blessed moment; so a few flakes, my dear Shepherd, of that Westmoreland ham—lay the knife on it, and its own weight will sink it down through the soft sweet sappiness of fat and lean, undistinguishably blended as the colours of the rainbow, and out of all sight incomparably more beautiful.

Shepherd. As for me, I care nae mair about what I eat, than I do what kind o' bed I sleep upon, sir. I hate onything stinkin or mooldy at board—or onything damp or musty in bed. But let the vivres be but fresh and wholesome—and if it's but scones and milk, I shut my een, say a grace, fa' to, and am thankfu';—let the bed be dry, and whether saft or hard, feathers, hair, cauff, straw, or heather, I'm fast in ten minutes, and my sowl waverin awa like a butterflee intil the land o' dreams.

North. Not a more abstemious man than old Kit North in his Majesty's dominions, on which the sun never sets. I have the most accommodating of palates.

Shepherd. Yes—it's an universal genius. I ken naething like it, sir, but your stammack.—"Sure such a pair were never seen!" Had ye never the colic?

North. Never, James, never. I confess that I have been guilty of many crimes, but never of a capital crime,—never of colic.

Shepherd. There's muckle confusion o' ideas in the brains o' the blockheads who accuse us o' gluttony, Mr North. Gluttony may be defined "an immoral and unintellectual abandonment o' the sowl o' man to his gustative natur." I defy a brute animal to be a glutton. A swine's no a glutton. Nae ovetur but man can be a glutton. A' the rest are prevented by the definition.

North. Is there any test of gluttony, James?

Shepherd. Watch twa men eatin. As lang's there's a power or capacity o' smilin on their cheeks, and in and about their een, —as lang's they keep lookin at you, and round about the table,

attendin to or joinin in the tauk, or the speakin caum,—as lang's they every noo an' than lay doun their knife and fork, to ca' for yill, or ask a young leddy to tak wine, or tell an anecdote,—as lang's they keep frequently ca'in on the servant lad or lass for a clean plate,—as lang's they glower on the framed picturs or prents on the wa', and keep askin if the tane's originals and the tither proofs,—as lang's they offer to carve the tongue or turkey—depend on't they're no in a state o' gluttony, but are devouring their soup, fish, flesh, and fowl, like men and Christians. But as sune's their chin gets creeshy —their cheeks lank, sallow, and clunk-clunky—their nostrils wide—their een fixed—their faces close to their trencher—and themsels dumbies—then you may see a specimen " o' the immoral and unintellectual abandonment o' the sowl o' man to his gustative natur;" then is the fast, foul, fat feeder a glutton, the maist disgustfu'est cretur that sits—and far aneath the level o' them that feed, on a' fowres, out o' trochs on garbage.

North. Sensuality is the most shocking of all sins, and its name is Legion.

Shepherd. Ay, there may be as muckle gluttony on sowens as on turtle-soup. A ploughman may be as greedy and as gutsy as an alderman. The sin lies not in the sense, but in the sowl. Sir—a red herring?

North. Thank ye, James.

Shepherd. Are you drinkin coffee?—Let me toast you a shave o' bread, and butter it for you on baith sides, sir?

[*The Shepherd kneels on the Tiger, and stretches out the Trident to Vulcan.*

North. Heaven will reward ye, James, for your piety to the old man.

Shepherd. Dinna think, sir, that I care about your last wull and testament. I'm nae legacy-hunter—nae Post-obit. But hae ye added the codicil?

North. The man who has not made his will at forty is worse than a fool—almost a knave.

Shepherd. I ken nae better test o' wisdom—wisdom in its highest sense—than a just last wull and testament. It blesseth generations yet unborn. It guardeth and strengtheneth domestic peace—and maketh brethren to dwell together in unity. Being dead, the wise testator yet liveth—his spirit abideth

invisible, but felt ower the roof-tree, and delighteth, morning and evening, in the thanksgiving Psalm.

North. One would think it were easy to act well in that matter.

Shepherd. One would think it were easy to act weel, sir, in a' maitters. Yet hoo difficult! The sowl seems, somehow or ither, to lose her simplicity; and, instead o' lookin wi' her twa natural een straucht forrits alang the great, wide, smooth, royal road o' truth and integrity, to keep restlessly glowerin round and round about wi' a thousan' artificial ogles upon a' the cross and by paths leading nae single body kens whither, unless it be into brakes, and thickets, and quagmires, and wildernesses o' moss—where ane may wander wearily and drearily up and doun for years, and never recover the richt road again, till death touches him on the shouther, and doun he fa's amang them that were, leavin a' that looked up to him for his effecks in doubt and dismay and desolation, wi' sore and bitter hearts, uncertain whether to gie vent to their feelings in blessings or in curses, in execration or prayer.

North. Of all the vices of old age, may gracious Heaven, my dearest James, for ever shield me from avarice!

Shepherd. Nae fear o' that. There's aither just ae enjoyment o' siller, or five hunder thousan' million. The rich maun either spend it thick and fast, as a nightingale scatters her notes on the happy air—or sit upon his guineas, like a clockin hen on a heap o' yellow addled eggs amang the nettles.

North. Picturesquely true.

Shepherd. Oh, sir! what delicht to a wise rich man in being lavish—in being prodigal! For thae twa words only carry blame alang wi' them according to the character o' the giver or the receiver. Wha mair lavish—wha mair prodigal than the Sun? Yet let him shower his beams for ever and ever all ower the Planetary System, frae Venus wi' her cestus to Saturn wi' his ring, and nane the poorer, either in licht or in heat, is he,—and nane the poorer will he ever be, till the Hand that hung him on high shall cut the golden cord by which he liveth in the sky, and he falls, his duty done, into the bosom of Chaos and Old Night!

North. My dear Shepherd!

Shepherd. But the Sun he shineth wi' unborrowed licht. There's the bonny Moon, God bless her mildest face, that

loveth still to cheer the pensive nicht wi' a lustre lent her by the joyful day—to give to earth a' she receives frae heaven. Puir, senseless, ungratefu' creturs we! Eying her frae our ain narrow vales, we ca' her changefu' and inconstant! But isna she, sweet satellite, for ever journeying on her gracious round, and why will we grudge her smiles to them far frae us, seein we are a' children o' ae Maker, and, according to his perfect laws, a' partakers in the same impartial bounty?—Here's a nice brown shave for you, sir.

[*The* SHEPHERD *rises from his knees on the rug—takes the bread from the prongs of the Trident, and fresh-butters it on both sides for* MR NORTH, *who receives it with a benign bow.*

North. Uncommonly yellow this butter, James, for the season. The grass must be growing——

Shepherd. Ay, you may hear 't growin. What years for vegetation the last beautifu' and glorious Three! The ongoings o' natur are in the lang-rin regular and steady;—but hoo and then the michty mother seems to obey some uncontrollable impulse, far within her fair large bosom, and "wantons as in her prime," outdoing her very self in beneficence to earth, and that mysterious concave we ca' heaven.

North. In spite of gout, rheumatism, lumbago, corns, and chilblains, into the Forest shall I wend my way, James, before midsummer.

Shepherd. And young and auld will be but ower happy to see you, sir, frae the lanely Douglas Tower to those o' Newark. Would ye believe't, an auld ash stullion in the garden hedge of Mount Benger shot out six scions last year, the langest o' them nine, and the shortest seven feet lang? That was growin for you, sir.

North. There has been much planting of trees lately in the Forest, James?

Shepherd. To my taste, to tell the truth, rather ower muckle—especially o' nurses.[1]

North. Nurses!—wet or dry nurses, James?

Shepherd. Baith. Larches and Scotch firs; or you may ca' them schoolmasters, that teach the young idea how to shoot. But thinnins in the Forest never can pay, I suspeck; and

[1] Trees of the hardier breed, put in at intervals to shelter the more tender plants as they grow.

except on bleaky knowes, the hardwood wad grow better, in my opinion, left to themsels, without either nurses or schoolmasters. The nurses are apt to overlay their weans, and the schoolmasters to forget, or, what's waur, to flog their pupils; and thus the rising is a stunted generation.

North. Forty-five years ago, my dear James, when you were too young to remember much, I loved the Forest for its solitary single trees, ancient yew or sycamore, black in the distance, but when near how gloriously green! Tall, delicately-feathered ash, whose limbs were still visible in latest summer's leafiness—birch, in early spring, weeping and whispering in its pensive happiness by the perpetual din of its own waterfall—oak, yellow in the suns of June——

Shepherd.—

> " The grace of forest charms decayed,
> And pastoral melancholy!"

North. What lovely lines! Who writes like Wordsworth!

Shepherd. Tuts! Me ower young to remember muckle fourty-five years ago! You're speakin havers. I was then twal—and I remember everything I ever heard or saw sin' I was three year auld. I recolleck the mornin I was pitten intil breeks as distinckly as if it were this verra day. They hurt me sair atween the fork and the inside o' the knees—but oh! I was a prood man—and the lamb that I chased all the way frae my father's hut to Ettrick Manse, round about the kirk, till I caught it on a gowany grave, and lay doun wi't in my arms on the sunny heap, had nae need to be ashamed o' itsel, for I hunted it like a collie—although, when I grupped it at last, I held it to my beatin bosom as tenderly as ever I hae since dune wee Jamie, when pittin[1] the dear cretur intil the crib that stauns at the side o' his mother's bed, after e'enin prayers.

North. I feel not undelightfully, my dear James, that I must be waxing old—very old—for of the last ten years of my life I remember almost nothing except by an effort; whereas the first ten—commencing with that bright, clear, undying light that borders the edge of the oblivion of infancy—have been lately becoming more intensely distinct; so that often the past is with me as it were the present—and the sad grey-haired ancient is again a blest golden-headed boy, singing a

[1] *Pittin*—putting.

chorus with the breezes, the birds, and the streams. Alas and alack-a-day!

Shepherd. 'Tis only sae that we ever renew our youth. Oh, sir, I hinna forgotten the colour o' the plumage o' ae single dove that ever sat cooin of old on the growin turf-riggin o' my father's hut! Ae great muckle, big, beautifu' ane in particular, blue as if it had dropt doun frae the sky—I see the noo, a' neck and bosom, cooin and cooin deep as distant thunder, round and round his mate, wha was whiter than the white sea-faem, makin love to the snawy cretur—wha cowered doun in fear afore her imperious and impassioned lord—yet in love stronger than fear—showing hoo in a' leevin natur passions seemingly the maist remote frae ane anither, coalesce into mysterious union by means o' ae pervading and interfusing speerit, that quickens the pulses o' that inscrutable secret—life!

North. All linnets have died, James—that race of loveliest lilters is extinct.

Shepherd. No thae. Broom and bracken are tenanted by the glad, meek creturs still,—but the chords o' music in our hearts are sair unstrung—the harp o' our heart has lost its melody. But come out to the Forest, my dear, my honoured sir, and fear not then when we twa are walking thegither without speakin among the hills, you

> "Will feel the airs that from them blow,
> A momentary bliss bestow;"

and the wild, uncertain, waverin music o' the Eolian harp that natur plays upon in the solitude, will again echo far far awa amang the recesses o' your heart, and the lintie will sing as sweetly as ever frae amang the blossoms o' the milk-white thorn. Or, if you canna be brocht to feel sae, you'll hae but to look in my wee Jamie's face, and his glistening een will convince you that Scotia's nightingale still singeth as sweetly as of yore!—But let us sit in to the fire, sir.

North. Thank you, Shepherd—thank you, James.

Shepherd (*wheeling his father's chair to the ingle corner, and singing the while*).—

> "THERE'S CHRISTOPHER NORTH THAT WONS IN YON GLEN,
> HE'S THE KING O' GUDE FALLOWS, AND WALE[1] O' AULD MEN!"

[1] *Wale*—best.

North. I cannot bear, James, to receive such attention paid to my bodily weakness—I had almost said, my decrepitude—by any living soul but yourself.—How is that, my dear Shepherd?

Shepherd. Because I treat you wi' tenderness, but no wi' pity—wi' sympathy, but no wi' compassion——

North. My dear James, ye must give us a book on synonymes. What delicacy of distinction!

Shepherd. I suspeck, sir, that mother wut and mother feeling hae mair to do wi' the truth o' metaphysical etymology and grammar than either lair[1] or labour. Ken the meanin, by self-experience, o' a' the nicest shades o' thoughts and feelings, and devil the fears but you'll ken the meanins o' the nicest shades o' syllables and words.

North. Good, James. Language flows from two great sources—the head and the heart. Each feeds ten thousand rills——

Shepherd. Reflectin different imagery—but no sae very different either—for—you see——

North. I see nothing, James, little or nothing, till you blow away the intervening mist by the breath of genius, and then the whole world outshines, like a panorama with a central sun.

Shepherd. Ah! sir. you had seen the haill world afore ever I kent you—a perfect wandering Ulysses.

North. Yes, James, I have circumnavigated the globe, and intersected it through all its zones, and, by Jupiter, there is not a climate comparable to that of Scotland.

Shepherd. I believe't. Blessed be Providence for having saved my life frae the curse o' a stagnant sky—a monotonous heaven. On flat land, and aneath an ever blue lift, I should sune hae been a perfect idiwut.

North. What a comical chap, James, you would have been, had you been born a negro!

Shepherd. Ay—I think I see you, sir, wi' great big blubber lips, a mouthfu' o' muckle white horse's teeth, and a head o' hair like the woo atween a ram's horns when he's grown ancient among the mountains. What Desdemona could hae stood out against sic an Othello?

[1] *Lair*—learning.

North. Are negroes, gentlemen, to sit in both Houses of Parliament?

Shepherd. Nae politics the nicht—nae politics. I'm sick o' politics. Let's speak about the weather. This has been a fine day, sirs.

North. A first-rate day, indeed, James. Commend me to a day who does not stand shilly-shallying during the whole morning and forenoon, with hands in his breeches pockets, or biting his nails, and scratching his head, unable to make up his mind in what fancy character he is to appear from meridian to sunset—but who——

Shepherd. Breaks out o' the arms o' the dark-haired, bricht-eed nicht, wi' the power and pomp o' a Titan, and frichtenin that bit puir timid lassie the Dawn out o' her seven senses, in thunder and lightning a' at ance storms the sky, till creation is drenched in flood, bathed in fire, and rocked by earthquake. That's the day for a poet, sirs—that's a pictur for the ee, and that's music for the lug o' imagination, sirs, till ane's verra speerit cums to creawte the war it trummles at, and to be composed o' the self-same yelements, gloomin and boomin, blackenin and brichtenin, pourin and roarin, and awsomely confusin and confoundin heaven and earth, and this life and the life that is to come, and a' the passions that loup up at sichts and soun's, joy, hope, fear, terror, exultation, and that mysterious uprisin and dounfa'in o' our mortal hearts connected somehoo or ither wi' the fleein cluds, and the tossin trees, and the red rivers in spate, and the sullen looks o' black bits o' sky-like faces, together wi' ane and a' o' thae restless shows o' uneasy natur appertainin, God knows hoo, but maist certain sure it is so, to the region, the rueful region o' man's entailed inheritance—the grave!

North. James, you are very pale—very white about the gills—are you well enough? Turn up your little finger. Pale! nay, now they are more of the colour of my hat—as if

> "In the scowl of heaven, his face
> Grew black as he was speaking."

The shadow of the thunder-cloud threatening the eyes of his imagination, has absolutely darkened his face of clay. He seems at a funeral—James!

Shepherd. Whare's the moral? What's the use of thunder, except in a free country? There's nae grandeur in the terror o' slaves flingin themsels doun on their faces amang the sugar-canes, in a tornawdo. But the low quick beatin at the heart o' a freeman, a bauld-faced son o' liberty, when simultawneous flash and crash rends Natur to her core,—why, that flutter, sir, that does homage to a Power aboon us, exalts the dreadful magnificence o' the instruments that Power employs to subjugate our sowls to his sway, and makes thunder and lichtnin, in sic a country as England and Scotland, sublime.

North. The short and the long of the matter seems to be, James, that when it thunders you funk.

Shepherd. Yes, sir, thunder frightens me *into* my senses.

North. Well said, James—well said.

Shepherd. Heaven forgive me—but ten out o' the eighteen wakin hours, I am an atheist.

North. And I.

Shepherd. And a' men. Puir, pitifu', ungratefu', and meeserable wretches that we are—waur than worms. An atheist's a godless man. Sweep a' thoughts o' his Maker out o' ony man's heart—and what better is he, as lang's the floor o' his being continues bare, than an atheist?

North. Little better, indeed.

Shepherd. I envy—I honour—I venerate—I love—I bless the man, who, like the patriarchs of old, ere sin drowned the world, ever walks with God.

North. James, here we must not get too solemn——

Shepherd. That's true; and let me hope that I'm no sae forgetfu' as I fear. In this season o' the year, especially when the flowers are a' seen again in lauchin flocks ower the braes, like children returnin to school after a lang snaw, I can wi' truth avoo, that the sicht o' a primrose is to me like the soun' o' a prayer, and that I seldom walk alone by mysel for half a mile, without thochts sae calm and sae serene, and sae humble and sae gratefu', that I howp I'm no deceivin mysel noo when I venture to ca' them—religious.

North. No, James, you are not self-deceived—Poetry melts into Religion.

Shepherd. It is Religion, sir; for what is Religion but a clear—often a sudden—insicht, accompanied wi' emotion, into the dependence o' a' beauty and a' glory on the Divine Mind?

A wee bit dew-wat gowany, as it maks a scarcely perceptible sound and stir, which it often does, amang the grass that loves to shelter but not hide the bonny earth-born star, glintin up sae kindly wi' its face into mine, while by good fortune my feet touched it not, has hundreds o' times affected me as profoundly as ever did the Sun himsel setting in a' his glory —as profoundly—and, oh! far mair tenderly, for a thing that grows and grows, and becomes every hour mair and mair beautifu', and then hangs fixed for a season in the perfection o' its lovely delicht, and then—wae is me—begins to be a little dim — and then dimmer and dimmer, till we feel that it is indeed—in very truth, there's nae denyin't—fading—fading —faded—gone—dead—buried. Oh, sir! sic an existence as that has an overwhelmin analogy to our ain life — and *that* I hae felt — nor doubt I that you, my dear sir, hae felt it too— when on some saft, sweet, silent incense-breathing morning o' spring—far awa, perhaps, frae the smoke o' ony human dwellin, and walkin ye cared na, kent na whither—sae early that the ground-bees were but beginnin to hum out o' their bikes[1] —when, I say, some flower suddenly attracted the licht within your ee, wi' a power like that o' the loadstone, and though, perhaps, the commonest o' the flowers that beautify the braes o' Scotland—only, as I said, a bit ordinary gowan—yet, what a sudden rush o' thochts and feelings overflowed your soul at the simple sicht! while a' nature becam for a moment owerspread wi' a tender haze belongin not tó hersel, for there was naething there to bedim her brightness, but existin only in your ain twa silly een, sheddin in the solitude a few holy tears!

North. James, I will trouble you for the red-herrings.

Shepherd. There. Mr North, I coud write twunty vollumms about the weather. Wad they sell?

North. I fear they might be deficient in incident.

Shepherd. Naething I write 's ever deficient in incident. Between us three, what think ye o' my *Shepherd's Calendar?*

North. Admirable, my dear James—admirable. To tell you the truth, I never read it in the Magazine; but I was told the papers were universally liked there—and now, as Vols., they are beyond—above—all praise.

Shepherd. But wull you say that in black and white in the

[1] *Bikes*—nests.

Magazine? What's the use o' rousin a body to their face, and abusin them ahint their backs? Setting them upon a pedestal in private, and in public layin them a' their length on the floor? You're jealous o' me, sir, that's the real truth, —and you wush that I was dead.

North. Pardon me, James, I merely wish that you never had been born.

Shepherd. That's far mair wicked. Oh! but jealousy and envy's twa delusive passions, and they pu' you doun frae your aerial altitude, sir, like twa ravens ruggin an eagle frae the sky.

North. From literary jealousy, James, even of you, my soul is free as the stone-shaded well in your garden from the ditch water that flows around it on a rainy day. I but flirt with the Muses, and when they are faithless, I whistle the haggards down the wind, and puff all care away with a cigar. But I have felt *the* jealousy, James, and of all passions it alone springs from seed wafted into the human heart from the Upas Tree of Hell.

Shepherd. Wheesht! Wheesht!

North. Shakespeare has but feebly painted that passion in Othello. A complete failure. I never was married, that I recollect—neither am I a black man,—therefore, I do not pretend to be a judge of Othello's conduct and character. But, in the first place, Shakespeare ought to have been above taking an anomalous case of jealousy. How could a black husband escape being jealous of a white wife? There was a cause of jealousy given in his very fate.

Shepherd. Eh? What? What? Eh? Faith there's something in that observation.

North. Besides, had Desdemona lived, she would have produced a mulatto. Could she have seen their "visages in their minds"? Othello and she going to church, with a brood of tawnies——

Shepherd. I dinna like to hear you speakin that way. Dinna profane poetry.

North. Let not poetry profane nature. I am serious, James. That which in real life would be fulsome, cannot breathe sweetly in fiction; for fiction is still a reflection of truth, and truth is sacred.

Shepherd. I agree wi' you sae far, that the Passion o' Jeal-

ousy in Luve can only be painted wi' perfect natur in a man that stands towards a woman in a perfectly natural relation. Otherwise, the picture may be well painted, but it is still but a picture of a particular and singular exhibition o' the passion —in short, as you say, o' an anomaly. I like a word I dinna weel understan'.

North. Mr Wordsworth calls Desdemona, "the gentle lady married to the Moor," and the line has been often quoted and admired. It simply asserts two facts—that she was a gentle lady, and that she was married to the Moor. What then?

Shepherd. I forgie her—I pity her—bat I can wi' difficulty respeck her—I confess. It was a curious kind o' hankerin after an opposite colour.

North. Change the character and condition of the parties —Can you imagine a white hero falling in love with a black heroine, in a country where there were plenty of white women? Marrying and murdering her in an agony of rage and love?

Shepherd. I can only answer for mysel—I never could bring mysel to marry a Blackamoor.

North. Yet they are often sweet, gentle, affectionate, meek, mild, humble, and devoted creatures—Desdemonas.

Shepherd. But men and women, sir, I verily believe, are different in mony things respectin the passion o' luve. I've kent bonny, young, bloomin lassies fa' in luve wi' auld, wizened, disgustin fallows,—I hae indeed, sir. It was their fancy. But I never heard tell o' a young, handsome, healthy chiel gettin impassioned on an auld, wrunkled, skranky hag, without a tocher. Now, sir, Othello was——

North. Well—well—let it pass——

Shepherd. Ay—that's the way o' you—the instant you begin to see the argument gaun against you, you turn the conversation, either by main force, or by a quirk or a sophism, and soe escape frae the net that was about to be flung ower you, and like a bird, awa up into the air — or invisible ower the edge of the horizon.

North. Well, then, James, what say you to Iago?

Shepherd. What about him?

North. Is his character in nature?

Shepherd. I dinna ken. But what for no?

North. What was his motive? Pure love of mischief?

Shepherd. Aiblins.[1]

North. Pride in power, and in skill to work mischief?

Shepherd. Aiblins.

North. Did he hate the Moor even to the death?

Shepherd. Aiblins.

North. Did he resolve to work his ruin, let the consequences to himself be what they might?

Shepherd. It would seem sae.

North. Did he know that his own ruin—his own death—must follow the success of this scheme?

Shepherd. Hoo can I tell that?

North. Was he blinded utterly to such result by his wickedness directed against Othello?

Shepherd. Perhaps he was. Hoo can I tell?

North. Or did he foresee his own doom—and still go on unappalled?

Shepherd. It micht be sae, for onything I ken to the contrary. He was ower cool and calculatin to be blinded.

North. Is he, then, an intelligible or an unintelligible character?

Shepherd. An unintelligible.

North. Therefore not a natural character. I say, James, that his conduct from first to last cannot be accounted for by any view that can be taken of his character. The whole is a riddle—of which Shakespeare has not given the solution. Now, all human nature is full of riddles; but it is the business of dramatic poets to solve them—and this one Shakespeare has left unsolved. But having himself proposed it, he was bound either to have solved it, or to have set such a riddle as the wit of man could have solved in two centuries. Therefore——

Shepherd. "Othello" is a bad play?

North. Not bad, but not good—that is, not greatly good—not in the first order of harmonious and mysterious creations—not a work worthy of Shakespeare.

Shepherd. Confound me if I can tell whether you're speakin sense or nonsense—truth or havers; or whether you be serious, or only playin aff upon me some o' your Mephistophiles tricks. I aften think you're an evil speerit in disguise, and that your greatest delight is in confounding truth and falsehood.

[1] *Aiblins*—perhaps.

North. My dear James, every word I have now uttered may be mere nonsense. — I cannot tell. But do you see my drift?

Shepherd. Na. I see you like a veshel tryin to beat up against a strong wund and a strong tide, and driftin awa to leeward, till it's close in upon the shore, and about to gang stern foremost in amang the rocks and the breakers. Sae far I see your drift, and nae farther. You'll soon fa' ower on your beam ends, and become a total wreck.

North. Well, then, mark my drift, James. We idolise Genius, to the neglect of the worship of Virtue. To our thoughts, Genius is all in all — Virtue absolutely nothing. Human nature seems to be glorified in Shakespeare, because his intellect was various and vast, and because it comprehended a knowledge of all the workings, perhaps, of human being. But if there be truth in that faith to which the Christian world is bound, how dare we, on that ground, to look on Shakespeare as almost greater and better than Man? Why, to criticise one of his works poorly, or badly, or insolently, is it held to be blasphemy? Why? Is Genius so sacred, so holy a thing, *per se*, and apart from Virtue? Folly all! One truly good action performed is worth all that ever Shakespeare wrote. Who is the Swan of Avon in comparison to the humblest being that ever purified his spirit in the waters of eternal life?

Shepherd. Speak awa! I'll no interrupt you—but whether I agree wi' you or no's anither question.

North. Only listen, James, to our eulogies on genius. How virtue must veil her radiant forehead before that idol! How the whole world speaks out her ceaseless sympathy with the woes of Genius! How silent as frost, when Virtue pines! Let a young poet poison himself in wrathful despair—and all the muses weep over his unhallowed bier. Let a young Christian die under the visitation of God, who weeps? No eye but his mother's. We know that such deaths are every day—every hour,—but the thought affects us not—we have no thought—and heap after heap is added, unbewailed, to city or country churchyard. But let a poet, forsooth, die in youth—pay the debt of nature early—and Nature herself, throughout her elements, must in her turn pay tribute to his shade.

Shepherd. Dinna mak me unhappy, sir—dinna mak me sae

very unhappy, sir, I beseech you—try and explain awa what you hae said, to the satisfaction o' our hearts and understandins.

North. Impossible. We are base idolaters. 'Tis infatuation—not religion. Is it Genius, or is it Virtue, that shall send a soul to heaven?

Shepherd. Virtue — there's nae denying that; — virtue, sir —virtue.[1]

North. Let us then feel, think, speak, and act, as if we so believed. Is Poetry necessary to our salvation? Is *Paradise Lost* better than the New Testament?

Shepherd. Oh! dinna mak me unhappy. Say again that Poetry is religion.

North. Religion has in it the finest and truest spirit of poetry, and the finest and truest spirit of poetry has in it the spirit of religion. But—

Shepherd. Say nae mair—say nae mair. I'm satisfied wi' that——

North. Oh! James, it makes my very soul sick within me to hear the puny whinings poured by philosophical sentimentalists over the failings—the errors—the vices of genius! There has been, I fear, too much of that traitorous dereliction of the only true faith, even in some eloquent eulogies on the dead, which I have been the means of giving to the world. Have you not often felt that, when reading what has been said about our own immortal Burns?

Shepherd. I have in my calmer moments.

North. While the hypocritical and the base exaggerated all that illustrious man's aberrations from the right path, nor had the heart to acknowledge the manifold temptations strewed around his feet,—the enthusiastic and the generous ran into the other extreme, and weakly—I must not say wickedly—strove to extenuate them into mere trifles—in too many instances to deny them altogether; and when too flagrant to be denied, dared to declare that we were bound to forget and forgive them on the score of the poet's genius—as if genius, the guardian of virtue, could ever be regarded as the pander to vice, and the slave of sin. Thus they were willing to sacrifice morality, rather than that the idol set up before their

[1] "Hac arte Pollux et vagus Hercules,
Enisus arces attigit igneas."—HORAT.

imagination should be degraded; and did far worse injury, and offered far worse insult, to Virtue and Religion, by thus slurring over the offences of Burns against both, than ever was done by those offences themselves—for Burns bitterly repented what they almost canonised; and the evil practice of one man can never do so much injury to society, as the evil theory of a thousand. Burns erred greatly and grievously; and since the world knows that he did, as well from friends as from foes, let us be lenient and merciful to him, whose worth was great; but just and faithful to that law of right, which must on no consideration be violated by our judgments, but which must maintain and exercise its severe and sovereign power over all transgressions, and more especially over the transgressions of those to whom nature has granted endowments that might have been, had their possessors nobly willed it, the ministers of unmingled good to themselves and the whole human race.

Shepherd. You've written better about Burns yoursel,[1] sir, nor onybody else breathin. That you hae—baith better and aftener—and a' friends of the poet ought to be grateful to Christopher North.

North. That is true praise coming from my Shepherd. But I have fallen into the error I now reprehended.

Shepherd. There's a set o' sumphs that say periodical literature has degraded the haill literature o' the age. They refer us to the standard warks o' the auld school.

North. There is intolerable impertinence in such opinions—and disgusting ignorance. Where is the body of philosophical criticism, of which these prigs keep prating, to be found? Aristotle's Poetics is an admirable manual—as far as it goes—but no more than a manual—outlines for a philosophical lecturer to fill up into a theory. Quintilian is fuller—but often false and oftener feeble—and too formal by far. Longinus was a man of fine enthusiasm, and wrote from an awakened spirit. But he was not a master of principles—though to a writer so eloquent I shall not deny the glory of deserving that famous panegyric—

"And is himself the Great Sublime he draws."

[1] See Professor Wilson's review of Lockhart's "Life of Burns," *Blackwood's Magazine*, vol. xxiii. p. 667; also his "Essay on the Life and Genius of Burns," prefixed to the "Land of Burns."

There is nothing else left us from antiquity deserving the name of philosophical criticism. Of the French school of philosophical criticism, I need say nothing—La Harpe is clear and sparkling enough, but very commonplace and very shallow. The names of twenty others prior to him I might recollect if I chose—but I choose at present to forget them all—as the rest of the world has done. As to the English school, Dryden and Dennis—forgive the junction, James—both wrote acute criticism; but the name of Dennis but for Pope would now have been in oblivion, as all his writings are — and "glorious John" had never gained that epithet, excellent as they are, by his prose prefaces. What other English critic flourished before the present age? Addison. His *Essays on the Imagination* may be advantageously read by young ladies, before they paper their hair with such flimsy lucubrations.

Shepherd. I'll no alloo ye to say a word against the author o' the *Vision o' Mirza.* As for the *Spectawtors*, I never could thole them[1]—no even Sir Roger Coventrey. What was Sir Roger Coventrey to Christopher North?

North. But, James, it is not fair to compare a fictitious with a real character.

Shepherd. No fair, perhaps, to the real character; but mair than fair to the fictitious ane.

North. As for the German critics—Lessing and Wieland are the best of them—and I allow they are stars. But as for the Schlegels, they are too often like men in a mist, imagining that they are among mountains by the side of a loch or river, while in good truth they are walking along a flat by the side of a canal.

Shepherd. Maist unendurable quacks baith o' them, I'll swear. Fine soundin words and lang sentences—and a theory to account for everything—for every man, woman, and child, that ever showed genius in ony age or kintra! as if there was ony need to account for a production o' natur under the laws o' Natur's God. O' a' reading the maist entirely useless, waur than useless, stupifyin, is "cause and effeck." Do the thing—and be done wi't—whether it be a poem, or a statue, or a picture, or an oraution,—but, for the love o' Heaven, nae

[1] The *Vision of Mirza*, however, *is* one of the *Spectators.*

botheration about the cause o' its origin in the climate or constitution o' the kintra that gied it birth—nae——

North. Why, James, you are for putting an end to all philosophy.

Shepherd. Philosophy? Havers.

North. Mr Wordsworth, nettled by the *Edinburgh Review*, speaks, in a note to a Lyrical Ballad, of "Adam Smith as the worst critic, David Hume excepted, that Scotland, a soil favourable to that species of weed, ever produced." Now, Adam Smith was perhaps the greatest political economist the world has yet produced, Ricardo excepted, and one of the greatest moralists,—I do not know whom to except. Witness his *Wealth of Nations*, and *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. But he was not a critic at all, nor pretended to be one, James, and therefore Mr Wordsworth had no right to include him in that class. He may have occasionally uttered sentiments about poetry (where authentically recorded?) with which Mr Wordsworth may not sympathise; and I am most willing to allow that Mr Wordsworth, being himself a great poet, knows far more about it than Father Adam. But 'tis childish and contemptible, in a great man like Mr Wordsworth, to give vent to his spleen towards a man, in many things as much his superior as in others he was his inferior; and erroneous as some of Adam Smith's vaguely and inaccurately reported opinions on poetry may be, not one of them, I will venture to say, was over half so silly and so senseless as this splenetic note of the Great Laker.

Shepherd. Wordsworth canna thole onything Scotch—no even me and the *Queen's Wake*.

North. He's greatly to be pitied for his narrow and anti-poetical prejudices against "braid" and poetical Scotland, "and stately Edinborough, throned on crags!" Why, James, we have the highest authority, you know, for calling ourselves a nation of gentlemen.

Shepherd. We didna need a king to speak nonsense about us, to mak us proud. Pride and Poverty are twuns.

North. Ay, James, many of our gentlemen are poor gentlemen indeed. But what right had Mr Wordsworth to join with Adam Smith the name of David Hume in one expression of contempt for the critical character? Let Mr Wordsworth

write such Essays as Hume wrote—such a History,—I speak now merely of *style*—and then, and not till then, may he venture, unassailed by universal laughter, to call David Hume "a weed." He was "a bright consummate flower," James, and though perhaps he did not think it,—also immortal in heaven as on earth.

Shepherd. I hate—I abhor to hear great men abusin, and pretendin—for it's a' pretence, mean and base pretence—to despise ane anither. I blush for them—I hang doun my head—I'm forced to—replenish my jug—to forget their frailties and their follies; and thus ye see, sir, how good springs out o' evil. Tak anither jug.

North. To-night I confine myself to Turkish coffee.

Shepherd. Weel, then, gie't[1] a dash o' Glenlivet.

North. Not a bad idea—let me try.

[NORTH *fills up his cup of coffee with Glenlivet.*

Shepherd. Speak awa, sir;—but will you forgie me for sayin that, in layin about you richt and left, you aiblins are subjectin yoursel to the same censure I hae been passin just now on ither great men——

North. But, James, this is a private party—a privileged place. Besides, the cases are not parallel—I am in the right—they are in the wrong—that makes all the difference in the world;—crush my opinions first, and then censure their utterance.

Shepherd. There's plenty to censure you without me. The haill periodical press censures you—but I maun confess they dinna crush your opinions.

North. Hume and Smith formed their taste on the classical models—ancient and modern—therefore Mr Wordsworth should have considered——

Shepherd. Tuts—Tuts——

North. As to our Scotch critics of a former age, there are Gerard, and Beattie, and Campbell, and Kames, and Blair[2]—all writers of great merit. Gerard, copious, clear, and acute,—though not a man of originality, a man of reflection. His

[1] *Gie't*—give it.

[2] Alexander Gerard, D.D., Professor of Moral Philosophy in Marischal College, and afterwards of Theology in King's College, Aberdeen: born 1728. James Beattie, LL.D., Professor of Moral Philosophy in Marischal College, Aberdeen: born 1735, died 1803. George Campbell, D.D., Principal of Marischal College, Aberdeen, author of the *Philosophy of Rhetoric*: born 1709, died 1796. Henry Home, afterwards Lord Kames, a Judge of the Court of

volumes on Taste and on Genius contain many excellent views and many good illustrations. But I dare say Mr Wordsworth never heard of the Aberdonian Professor. Beattie was a delightful poet—that Mr Wordsworth well knows—and, Mr Alison[1] excepted, the best writer on Literature and the Fine Arts Britain ever produced—full of feeling and full of genius. Kames was "gleg as ony wummle," and, considering his multifarious studies, the author of the *Elements of Criticism* is not to be sneezed at—he was no weed—a real rough Bur-Thistle, and that is not a weed, but a fine bold national flower. As to Dr Blair, his sermons—full of truth, and most elegantly, simply, and beautifully written—will live thousands of years after much of our present pompous preaching is dead, and buried, and forgotten; and though his *Lectures on the Belles Lettres* are a compilation, they are informed by a spirit of his own—pure and graceful,—and though the purity and the grace are greater than the power and the originality, he who thinks them stupid must be an ass—and let him bray against the Doctor "till he stretch his leathern coat almost to bursting."

Shepherd. I never read a single word o' ane o' thae books you've been speakin about—and what the better wad I hae been, tell me, if I had written abstracts o' them a', and committed the contents to memory?

North. Your education, James, has been a very good one—and well suited, I verily believe, to your native genius. But you will allow that other people may have been the better of them, and of other books on various subjects?

Shepherd. Ou ay—ou ay! I'm verra liberal. I hae nae objections to let other folk read a' through the Advocates' Library—but, for my ain pairt, I read nane——

North. And yet, James, you are extremely well informed on most subjects. Indeed, out of pure science, I do not know one on which you are ignorant.—How is that?

Shepherd. I canna say. I only ken I reads amaist nane—

Session, and author of *Elements of Criticism:* born 1696, died 1782. Hugh Blair, D.D., Professor of Rhetoric in the University of Edinburgh, author of *Lectures on Rhetoric, Sermons:* born 1718, died 1800.

[1] Archibald Alison, LL.B., held for many years the first charge of St Paul's Episcopal Chapel, Edinburgh: he published *An Essay on the Nature and Principles of Taste:* born 1757, died 1839. The author of *The History of Europe* is his son.

no even the Magazine, except my ain articles—and noo and then a Noctes, which I'm entitled to consider my ain articles; for without the Shepherd, Gurney, wouldna ye be aff to Norwich—wouldna ye, Gurney?

Mr Gurney (*with stentorian lungs*). YES! LIKE A SHOT.

North. As my admirable friend, Mr Campbell, says—

> "Without the laugh from partial shepherd won,
> Oh what were we? a world without a sun!"

Shepherd. I hate to hear leevin folk, that never wrote books, or did onything else remarkable, gossiped about, and a' their stupid clishmaclaver, by way o' wut, retailed by their puny adherents, mair childish if possible than themsels—a common nuisance in Embro' society—especially amang advocats and writers; but I love to hear about the dead—famous authors in their day—even although I ken but the soun o' their bare names—and cudna spell them, aiblins, in writin them doun on paper. Say on.

North. I forgot old Sam—a jewel rough set, yet shining like a star; and though sand-blind by nature, and bigoted by education, one of the truly great men of England, and "her men are of men the chief," alike in the dominions of the understanding, the reason, the passions, and the imagination. No prig shall ever persuade me that *Rasselas* is not a noble performance,—in design and in execution. Never were the expenses of a mother's funeral more gloriously defrayed by son, than the funeral of Samuel Johnson's mother by the price of *Rasselas*, written for the pious purpose of laying her head decently and honourably in the dust.

Shepherd. Ay, that was pittin literature and genius to a glorious purpose indeed; and therefore nature and religion smiled on the wark, and have stamped it with immortality.

North. Samuel was seventy years old when he wrote the *Lives of the Poets.*

Shepherd. What a fine old buck! No unlike yoursel.

North. Would it were so! He had his prejudices, and his partialities, and his bigotries, and his blindnesses,—but on the same fruit-tree you see shrivelled pears or apples on the same branch with jargonelles or golden pippins worthy of paradise. Which would ye show to the Horticultural Society as a fair specimen of the tree?

Shepherd. Good, Kit, good—philosophically picturesque. [*Mimicking the old man's voice and manner.*

North. Show me the critique that beats his on Pope, and on Dryden—nay, even on Milton; and hang me if you may not read his Essay on Shakespeare even after having read Charles Lamb, or heard Coleridge, with increased admiration of the powers of all three, and of their insight, through different avenues, and as it might seem almost with different bodily and mental organs, into Shakespeare's "old exhausted," and his "new imagined worlds." He was a critic and a moralist who would have been wholly wise, had he not been partly—constitutionally insane. For there is blood in the brain, James — even in the organ — the vital principle of all our "eagle-winged raptures;"—and there was a taint of the black drop of melancholy in his——

Shepherd. Wheesht—wheesht—let us keep aff that subject. All men ever I knew are mad; and but for that law o' natur, never, never in this warld had there been a Noctes Ambrosianæ!

North. Oh, dear! oh, dear!—I have forgot Edmund Burke—and Sir Joshua—*par Nobile Fratrum.* The *Treatise on the Sublime and Beautiful*— though written when Ned was a mere boy—shows a noble mind, clutching at all times at the truth, and often grasping it for a moment, though, like celestial quicksilver, it evanishes out of hand. Of voluptuous animal beauty, the illustrious Irishman had that passionate sense—nor unprofound—with which nature has gifted the spirit of all his race. And he had a soul that could rise up from languishment on Beauty's lap, and aspire to the brows of the sublime. His juvenile Essay contains some splendid—some magnificent passages; and with all its imperfections, defects, and failures, may be placed among the highest attempts made by the human mind to cross the debateable land that lies between the kingdoms of Feeling and of Thought, of Sense and Imagination.

Shepherd. That's geyan misty, and wudna be easy got aff by heart.

North. As for Sir Joshua, with pen and pencil he was equally a great man.

Shepherd. A great man?

North. Yes. What but genius as original as exquisite

could have flung a robe of grace over even a vulgar form, as if the hand of nature had drawn the aerial charm over the attitudes and motions thus magically elevated into ideal beauty? Still retaining, by some finest skill, the similitude of all the lineaments, what easy flowing outlines adorned the canvass, deceiving the cheated sitter or walker into the pardonable delusion that she was one of the Graces:—or Muses, at the least—nay, Venus herself looking out for Mars on the distant horizon, or awaiting Anchises on the hill.

Shepherd. Even I, sir, a shepherd——

North. The Shepherd, my dear James.

Shepherd. Even I, sir, *The* Shepherd—though mair impressible by beauty than by grace, know what grace is, ever since the first time that I saw a wild swan comin floatin wi' uplifted wings doun afore the wind through amang the rippled water-lilies that stretch frae baith shores far intil ae pairt o' St Mary's Loch, leavin but a narrow dark-blue channel for the gracefu' naïad to come glidin through, wi' her lang, smooth, white neck bendin back atween her snaw-white sails, and her full breast seemin, as it ploughed the sma' sunny waves, whiter and whiter still — noo smooth, smooth — and noo slightly ruffled, as the foam half dashed against and half flew awa, without touchin't, frae the beautifu' protrusion o' that depth o' down!

North. Verra weel — nae mair, Jamie. Then as to Sir Joshua's writings, their spirit is all in delightful keeping with his pictures. One of the few painters he—such as Leonardo Da Vinci, Michael Angelo, and so on — our own Barry, Opie, Fuseli, and so on — who could express by the pen the principles which guide the pencil. 'Tis the only work on art which, to men not artists, is entirely intelligible——

Shepherd. The less painters in general write the better, I suspeck.

North. But what led to our conversation about philosophical criticism? Oh! I have it. Well then, James, compare with this slight sketch of the doings of the men of former generations, from the beginning of time down to nearly the French Revolution, those of our present race of critics—in Britain—and how great our superiority! Dugald Stewart[1] has just

[1] Born in 1753. died in 1828. He was Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh from 1785 to 1810, when he retired in favour of Dr Thomas Brown.

left us,—and though his poetical was not so good as his philosophical education, — and though his eye had scarcely got accustomed to the present bright flush of Poetry, yet his delightful volume of Miscellaneous Essays proves that he stood—and for ever will stand — in the First Order of critics, —generous, enthusiastic, and even impassioned, far beyond the hair-splitting spirit of the mere metaphysician. And there is our own Alison, still left, and long may he be left to us, whose work on Taste and the Association of Ideas ought to be in the hands of every poet, and of every lover of poetry,—so clear in its statement, so rich in its illustration of Principles.

Shepherd. This seems to me to be the only age of the world, sir, in which poetry and creetishism ever gaed, like sisters, hand in hand, encircled wi' a wreath o' flowers.

North. Now—all our philosophical criticism—or nearly all —is periodical; and fortunate that it is so both for taste and genius. It is poured daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, into the veins of the people, mixing with their very heart-blood. Nay, it is like the very air they breathe.

Shepherd. Do you mean to say, "if they have it not, they die?"

North. Were it withheld from them now, their souls would die or become stultified. Formerly, when such disquisitions were confined to quarto or octavo volumes, in which there was nothing else, the author made one great effort, and died in book-birth — his offspring sharing often the doom of its unhappy parent. If it lived, it was forthwith immured in a prison called a library — an uncirculating library — and was heard no more of in this world, but by certain worms.

Shepherd. A' the warld's hotchin wi' authors noo, like a pond wi' powheads.[1] Out sallies Christopher North frae amang the reeds, like a pike, and crunches them in thousands.

North. Our current periodical literature teems with thought and feeling, James,—with passion and imagination. There was Gifford, and there are Jeffrey, and Southey, and Campbell, and Moore, and Bowles, and Sir Walter, and Lockhart, and Lamb, and Wilson, and De Quincey, and the four Coleridges, S. T. C., John, Hartley, and Derwent, and Croly, and Maginn, and Mackintosh, and Cunningham, and Kennedy, and Stebbings, and St Ledger, and Knight, and Praed, and Lord

[1] *Powheads*—tadpoles.

Dudley and Ward, and Lord L. Gower, and Charles Grant, and Hobhouse, and Blunt, and Milman, and Carlyle, and Macaulay, and the two Moirs, and Jerdan, and Talfourd, and Bowring, and North, and Hogg, and Tickler, and twenty—forty—fifty—other crack contributors to the Reviews, Magazines, and Gazettes, who have said more tender, and true, and fine, and deep things in the way of criticism, than ever was said before since the reign of Cadmus, ten thousand times over, — not in long, dull, heavy, formal, prosy theories, — but flung off-hand, out of the glowing mint—a coinage of the purest ore—and stamped with the ineffaceable impress of genius. Who so elevated in intellectual rank as to be entitled to despise such a Periodical Literature?

Shepherd. Nae leevin man—nor yet dead ane.

North. The whole surface of society, James, is thus irrigated by a thousand streams; some deep—some shallow——

Shepherd. And the shallow are sufficient for the purpose o' irrigation. Water three inches deep, skilfully and timeously conducted ower a flat o' fifty or a hunder acres, wull change arid sterility, on which half-a-score sheep would be starved in a month, intil skeletons, intil a flush o' flowery herbage that will feed and fatten a haill score o' kye. You'll see a proof o' this when you come out to Mount Benger. But no to dwall on ae image—let me say that millions are thus pleased and instructed, who otherwise would go dull and ignorant to their graves.

North. Every month adds to the number of these admirable works; and from the conflict of parties, political, poetical, and philosophical, emerges, in all her brightness, the form of Truth. Why, there, James, lies THE SPECTATOR, a new weekly paper, of some half-year's standing or so, of the highest merit, and I wish I had some way of strenuously recommending it to the Reading Public. The editor,[1] indeed, is Whiggish and a Pro-Catholic—but moderate, steady, and consistent in his politics. Let us have no turncoats. His *précis* of passing politics is always admirable; his mercantile information—*that* I know on the authority of as good a judge as lives—is correct and comprehensive; miscellaneous news are collected judiciously and amusingly from all quarters; the literary depart-

[1] Mr Rintoul, under whose management the *Spectator* is still (1855) remarkable for its condensation, clear-sightedness, and independence.

ment is equal, on the whole, to that of any other weekly periodical, such as *The Literary Gazette* (which, however, has the great advantage of being altogether literary and scientific, and stands, beyond dispute, at the head of its own class), *Weekly Review*, *Athenæum*, *Sphynx*, *Atlas*, or others,—I nowhere see better criticism on poetry—and nowhere nearly so good criticism on theatricals. Some critiques there have been, in that department, superior, in exquisite truth of tact, to anything I remember—worthy of Elia himself, though not apparently from Elia; and in accounts of foreign literature, especially French, and, above all, of French politics, a subject on which I need to be enlightened, I have seen no periodical at all equal to the *Spectator*.

Shepherd. The numbers you sent out-by deserved a' that ye say o' them. It's a maist enterteenin and instructive—a maist miscellawneous Miscellany.

North. And without being wishy-washy——

Shepherd. Or wersh——

North. The *Spectator* is impartial. It is a fair, open, honest, and manly periodical.

Shepherd. Wheesht! I hear a rustlin in the letter-box.

North. John will have brought up my newspapers from the Lodge, expecting that I am not to be at home to dinner.

Shepherd. Denner! it's near the dawin!

[*The* Shepherd *opens the letter-box in the door, and lays down nearly a dozen Newspapers on the table.*

North. Ay, there they are, the *Herald*, the *Morning Post*, the *Morning Journal*, the *Courier*, the *Globe*, the *Standard*, and "the Rest." Let me take a look into the *Standard*, as able, argumentative, and eloquent a Paper as ever supported civil and religious liberty—that is, Protestantism in Church and State.—No disparagement to its stanch brother, the *Morning Journal*, or its excellent cousin, the *Morning Post*. Two strong, steady, well-bred wheelers—and a Leader that shows blood at all points—and covers his ground like the Phenomenon.—No superior set-out to an—Unicorn. [North *unfolds the Standard.*

Shepherd. I never read prent after twal. And as for newspapers, I carena if they should be a month auld. It's pitifu' to see some folk—nae fules neither—unhappy if their paper misses comin ony nicht by the post. For my ain pairt, I like best to receive a great heap o' them a' at ance in a parshel by the carrier. Ony news, North?

North. Eh?

Shepherd. Ony news? Are you deaf? or only absent?

North. Eh?

Shepherd. There's mainners—the mainners o' a gentleman—o' the auld schule too.—Ony news?

North. Hem—hem[1]——

Shepherd. His mind's weaken'd. Millions o' reasonable creatures at this hour perhaps—na—no at this hour—but a' this evenin—readin newspapers! And that's the philosophy o' human life! London sendin out, as frae a great reservoir, rivers o' reports, spates o' speculations to inundate, to droon, to deluge the haill island! I hear the torrents roarin, but the soun' fa's on my ear without stunnin my heart. There comes a drought, and they are a' dry. Catholic Emancipation! Stern shades of the old Covenanters, methinks I hear your voices on the moors and the mountains! But weep not, wail not—though a black cloud seems to be hanging over all the land! Still will the daisy, "wee modest crimson-tipped flower," bloom sweetly on the greensward that of yore was reddened wi' your patriot, your martyr blood. Still will the foxglove, as the silent ground-bee bends doun the lovely hanging bells, shake the pure tears of heaven over your hallowed graves! Though annual fires run along the bonny bloomin heather, yet the shepherds ne'er miss the balm and brightness still left at mornin to meet them on the solitary hills. The sound of Psalms rises not now, as they sublimely did in those troubled times, from a tabernacle not built with hands, whose side-walls were the rocks and cliffs, its floor the spacious sward, and its roof the eternal heavens. But from beneath many a lowly roof of house, and hut, and hovel, and shielin, and sylvan cosy bield, ascend the humble holy orisons of poor and happy men, who, when comes the hour of sickness or of death, desire no other pillow for their swimming brain than that Bible, which to them is the Book of everlasting life, even as the Sun is the Orb of the transitory day. And to maintain that faith is now, alas! bigotry and superstition! The Bible is to take care of itself. If it cannot, let it perish! Let innocence and virtue, and truth and knowledge and freedom, all take care of themselves, and let all their enemies seek, as they will, insidiously to seduce, openly to outrage;—for if they

[1] It was Professor Wilson's habit, when great events were astir, to be much absorbed in the newspaper he happened to be reading.

cannot stand fast against all the powers of evil, they deserve to die! And this it seems is—Christian doctrine! It may be held sae in great cities, where sin sits in high places, where the weak soon become worthless, and the worthless wicked, and the wicked blind; but never, never will it be the creed of the dwellers on the gracious bosom of nature!—of those who, whether amang spacious tree-sprinkled plains made beautifu' and solemn wi' a hundred church towers and cathedrals, at work or in pastime lift up a gaze, bold before man, but meek before God, to the blue marbled skies of merry and magnificent England!—of those who, beneath mist and cloud, wanderin through lonely regions whose silence hears but the eagle's cry or the torrent's roar, as they pass by the little kirk on the knowe let their softened een follow up the spire, till from its sun-licht point momentarily glancin through the gloom, they muse on the storm-driftin heavens, through which shines as brightly as in the fairest clime the eye o' the all-seeing God.—But where am I? In the silence I thocht it was the Sabbath—and that I was in the Forest. High thochts and pure feelings can never come amiss—either in place or in time. Folk that hae been prayin in a kirk may lauch, without blame, when they hae left the kirkyard. Silly thochts maun never be allowed to steal in amang sacred anes—but there never can be ony harm in sacred thochts stealing in amang silly anes. A bit bird singin by itsel in the wilderness has sometimes made me amaist greet,[1] in a mysterious melancholy that seemed wafted towards me on the solitary strain, frae regions ayont the grave. But it flitted awa into silence, and in twa or three minutes I was singin ane o' my ain cheerful—nay, funny sangs.—Mr North, I say, will ye never hae dune readin at that *Stannard*? It's a capital paper—I ken that—nane better—na, nane sae gude, for it's faithful and fearless, and cuts like a twa-handed twa-edged swurd. Mr North, I say, I'll begin to get real angry if you'll no speak. O man! but that's desperate bad mainners to keep glowering like a gawpus on a newspaper, at what was meant to be a crick-crack atween twa auld freens. Fling't doun. I'm sayin, sir, fling't doun. O but you're ugly the noo—and what's waur, there's nae meanin in your face. You're a puir, auld, ugly, stupid, vulgar, disagreeable, and dishonest-looking fallow, and a'm baith sorry and ashamed that I sud be sittin

[1] *Greet*—weep.

in sic company. Fling doun the *Stannard*—if you dinna, it 'ill be waur for you, for you've raised my corruption. Flesh and bluid can bear this treatment nae langer. I'll gie just ae mair warnin.—Fling doun the *Stannard*. Na, you wunna—won't you? Weel, tak that.

[*The* SHEPHERD *throws a glass of toddy in* MR NORTH'S *face.*

North. Ha! What the deuce is that? My cup has jumped out of my hand and spurted the Glenlivet-coffee into its master's countenance. James, lend me your pocket-handkerchief. [*Relapses into the Standard.*

Shepherd. Fling doun the *Stannard*—or I'll gang mad. Neist time I'll shy the jug at him — for if it's impossible to insult, it may perhaps be possible to kill him — Fling doun the *Stannard*. You maddenin auld sinner, you wad be cheap o' death! Yet I maunna kill him — I maunna kill him — for I micht be hanged.

North. Nobly said, Sadler[1] — nobly said! I have long known your great talents, and your great eloquence, too; but I hardly hoped for such a display of both as this — Hear! — hear! — hear! — There — my trusty fere — you have indeed clapped the saddle on the right horse.

Shepherd. Tak that.

[*Flings another glass of toddy in* MR NORTH'S *face.*

North (*starting up*). Fire and fury!

Shepherd. Butter and brimstone! How daured you to treat me?——

North. This outrage must not pass unpunished. Hogg, I shall give you a sound thrashing.

[MR NORTH *advances towards the* SHEPHERD *in an offensive attitude. The* SHEPHERD *seizes the poker in one hand, and a chair in the other.*

Shepherd. Haud aff, sir, — haud aff — or I'll brain you. Dinna pick a quarrel wi' me. I've dune a' I could to prevent it; but the provocation I received was past a' endurance. Haud aff, sir,—haud aff.

North. Coward! coward! coward!

Shepherd. Flyte[2] awa, sir—flyte awa;—but haud aff, or I'll fell you.

[1] Michael Thomas Sadler, M.P., 1829, for Newark-upon-Trent, was born in 1780 and died in 1835. The amelioration of the condition of the factory children in England, and of the Irish poor, was due very much to his exertions. His principal works were *Ireland, its Evils and their Remedies*,—and *The Law of Population*, written in opposition to Malthus. [2] *Flyte*—rail.

North (*resuming his seat*). I am unwilling to hurt you, James, on account of those at Mount Benger; but lay down the poker—and lay down the chair.

Shepherd. Na — na — na. Unless you first swear on the Bible that you'll tak nae unfair advantage.

North. Let my word suffice—I won't. Now go to that press — and you will see a pair of gloves. Bring them to me—— [*The* SHEPHERD *fetches the gloves.*

Shepherd. Ca' you thae gloves?

North (*stripping and putting on the gloves*). Now, sir, use your fists as you best may—and in five minutes I shall take the conceit out of you——

Shepherd (*peeling to the sark*). I'll sune gie you a bluidy nose.

[*The combatants shake hands and put themselves into attitude.*

North. Take care of your eyes.

[SHEPHERD *elevates his guard—and* NORTH *delivers a desperate right-handed lunge on his kidneys.*

Shepherd. That's no fair, ye auld blackguard.

North. Well, then, is that?

[SHEPHERD *receives two left-handed facers, which seem to muddle his knowledge-box. He bores in wildly on the old man.*

Shepherd. Whew—whew—whew. Fu—fu—fu. What's that? What's that? [*The* SHEPHERD *receives pepper.*

North. Hit straight, James. So—so—so—so—so—so.

Shepherd. That's foul play. There's mair nor ane o' you. Wha's that joinin in? Let me alane—and I'll sune finish him——

[MR NORTH, *who has gradually retreated into a corner of the Snuggery, gathers himself up for mischief, and as the* SHEPHERD *rushes in to close, delivers a stinger under* JAMES'S *ear, that floors him like a shot.* MR NORTH *then comes out, as actively as a bird on the bough of a tree.*

North. I find I have a hit in me yet. A touch on the jugular always tells tales. Hollo! hollo! My dear James! Deaf as a house.

[MR NORTH *takes off the gloves—fetches a tumbler of the jug—and kneeling tenderly down by the* SHEPHERD *bathes his temples.* JAMES *opens his eyes, and stares wildly around.*

Shepherd. Is that you, Gudefallow? Hae I had a fa' aff a horse, or out o' the gig?

North. My dear maister—out o' the gig. The young horse

took fricht at a tup loupin[1] ower the wa', and set aff like lichtnin. You sudna hae louped out — You sudna hae louped out.

Shepherd. Whare's the gig?

North. Never mind, maister.

Shepherd. I say, whare's the gig?

North. In the Loch——

Shepherd. And the horse?

North. In the loch too——

Shepherd. Droon'd?

North. Not yet—if you look up, you'll see him soomin across wi' the gig.

Shepherd (*fixing his eyes on vacancy*). Ay—sure aneuch—yonner he goes!

North. Yon proves his breed. He's descended from the water-horse.

Shepherd. I'm verra faint. I wush I had some whusky——

North. Here, maister—here——

[*The* SHEPHERD *drains the tumbler, and revives.*

Shepherd. Am I in the open air, or in a hoose? I howp a hoose—or there maun be a concussion o' the brain, for I seem to see chairs and tables.

North. Yes, maister—you have been removed in a blanket by eight men to Mount Benger.

Shepherd. Is baith my legs brok?

North. Dinna ask—dinna ask. We've sent an express to Embro' for Liston.[2] They say that when he sets broken legs they're stronger than ever.

Shepherd. He's a wonderfu' operawtor—but I can scarcely believe that. Oh! am I to be for life a lameter![3] It's a judgment on me for writin the Chaldee![4]

[1] *Loupin*—leaping.

[2] Robert Liston, one of the most eminent surgeons of the day, first in Edinburgh, and afterwards in London. He died in 1847.

[3] *Lameter*—a cripple.

[4] Hogg's share in the authorship of the Chaldee MS. has been already pointed out; see Preface, p. xvi. Messrs Pringle and Cleghorn—both of whom were excessively lame—were the editors of the first six numbers of *Blackwood's Magazine*. In the Chaldee they are thus satirically described by the Shepherd:—

"4. And I turned mine eyes, and behold two beasts came from the land of the borders of the south; and when I saw them I wondered with great admiration.

"5. The one beast was like unto a lamb, and the other like unto a bear, and they had wings on their heads; their faces also were like the faces of men, the

North. I canna thole, maister, to see you greetin——

Shepherd. Mercifu' powers! but your face has changed intil that o' an auld man!—Was Mr North frae Embro' here the noo?

North. I am indeed that unhappy old man. But 'tis all but a dream, my dear James—'tis all but a dream! What means all this wild disjointed talk of yours about gigs and horses, and a horse and a gig swimming over St Mary's Loch! Here we are, my beloved friend, in Edinburgh—in Picardy—at the Noctes Ambrosianæ—at high-jinks, my James, after a bout with the mufflers and the naked mawleys.

Shepherd. I dreamed that I had knocked you down, sir—Was that the case?

North. It was indeed, James. But I am not angry with you. You did not mean to hit so hard. You generously ran in to keep me from falling, and by some strange sudden twist, you happened to fall undermost, and to save me sacrificed yourself.—'Twas a severe stun.

Shepherd. The haill wecht o' mist has rolled itsel up into cluds on the mountain-taps, and all the scenery aneath lies fresh and green, wi' every kent house and tree. But I howp you're no sair hurt yoursel—let me help you up——

[*The* SHEPHERD *assists* MR NORTH, *who has been sitting on the floor, like the Shah, to recover his pins—and the two walk arm-in-arm to their respective chairs.*

North. I am sorely shaken, James. An account of our Set-to, our Turn-up, James, ought to be sent to that admirable sporting paper, *Bell's Life in London.*

Shepherd. Let it, my dear sir, be a lesson to you the langest day you leeve, never to pick a quarrel, or even to undertak ony half-and-half sort o' horse-play wi' a younger and a stronger man than yoursel. Sir, if I hadna been sae weel up to the business, that fa' might hae been your last. As for thae nasty gloves, I never wush to see their faces again a' the days o' my life. What's that chappin?

North. Probably Picardy. See, the door's locked inside.

[*The* SHEPHERD *unlocks and opens the door.*

Shepherd. What mob's this?

joints of their legs* like the polished cedars of Lebanon, and their feet like the feet of horses preparing to go forth to battle; and they arose, and they came onward over the face of the earth, and they touched not the ground as they went."

* *i. e.* Their crutches.

North. Show in the Democracy.

(*Enter* PICARDY, MON. CADET, *the Manciple, the Clerk of the Pipe,* KING PEPIN, SIR DAVID GAM, TAPPYTOORIE, *and the* "*Rest.*")

Ambrose (*while* OMNES *hold up their hands*). Dear me! dear me!

Shepherd. What are you a' glowerin at me for, ye fules?

North. Tappy, bring me a looking-glass.

[*Exit* TAPPY, *volans.*

Shepherd. I say, ye fules, what are ye glowerin at me in that gate for? Do you see horns on my head?

(*Re-enter* TAPPY, *with a copy of the Mirror*).

North. Take a glance, my dear James, at the Magic Mirror.

[*The* SHEPHERD *looks in, and recoils to the sideboard.*

Shepherd. What'n a face! What'n a pair o' black, blue, green, yellow een!

North. We must apply leeches. Mr Ambrose, bring in a few bottles of leeches, and some raw veal-steaks.

Shepherd. Aff wi' you—aff wi' you—the haill tot o' you.

[*Exit* PICARDY, *with his Tail.*

North. Come to my arms, my incomparable Shepherd, and let us hob and nob, to "Gude nicht and joy be wi' us a'," in a caulker of Millbank; and let us, during the "wullie waught," think of him whose worthy name it bears—

Shepherd. As gude a chiel's in Christendie!—Oh, my ever-honoured sir, what wad the warld say, if she kent the concludin proceedins o' this nicht! That we were twa auld fules!

North. At times, James,

"'Tis folly to be wise."

Shepherd. As auld Crow, the Oxford orator, says at the end o' his bonny descriptive poem, *Lewesdon Hill*—

"To-morrow for severer thought—but now
To breakfast."

North. To bed—you mean——

Shepherd. No—to breakfast. It's mornin. The East is brichtenin—Look over awaukenin Leith—and, lo! white sails glidin ower the dim blue sea!

North. Let us each take a cold bath.

[MR NORTH *and* SHEPHERD *disappear.*

SIC TRANSEUNT NOCTES AMBROSIANÆ.

XXI.

(MAY 1829.)

Scene I. — Buchanan Lodge — the Virgin's Bower Arbour. Time,—Four in the Afternoon. NORTH *and the* SHEPHERD *partaking of a Cold Collation.*

NORTH *and* SHEPHERD.

Shepherd. Let's hae just ae single hour's twa-haun'd crack, afore we gang into the Lodge to dress for the Tea-party.

North. There is something interesting, my dear James, nay impressive, almost melancholy, in the first cold Dinner of the year.

Shepherd. Come—come, sir—nae sentimentality;—besides, a cauld denner's no muckle amiss, provided there only be an ashet o' het mealy potatoes.

North. Spring is with me the happiest season of the year. How tempting the young esculents, as they spring up in their virginity along the weedless garden-beds! Then the little fattening twin-lambs, James, racing on the sunny braes, how pleasing to the poetical palate!

Shepherd. Though I tauld you no to be sentimental, I didna bid you be sensual.

North. I sit corrected. Lo, winter is over and gone.

Shepherd. Na—

"Wunter lingerin chills the lap o' May."

But May is a merry month, and I kenna whether the smiles or the frowns on her face be the mair beautifu'—just like a haughty damsel, in the pride o' her teens, sometimes flingin a scornfu' look to you ower her shouther, as if she despised a' mankind; and then a' at ance, as if touched by gentle thochts, relaxin intil a burst o' smiles, like the sun, on a half-stormy

day, comin out suddenly frae amang the breakin clouds, and changing at ance earth into heaven. O, sir, but the Lodge is a bonny place noo.

North. I love suburban retirement, James, even more than the remotest rural solitude. In old age, one needs to have the neighbourhood of human beings to lean upon—and in the stillness of awakening morn or hushing eve, my spirit yearns towards the hum of the city, and finds a relief from all o'ermastering thoughts, in its fellowship with the busy multitudes sailing along the many streams of life, too near to be wholly forgotten, and yet far enough off not to harass or disturb. In my most world-sick dreams I never longed to be a hermit in his cave. Mine eyes have still loved the smoke of human dwellings—and when my infirmities keep me from church, sitting here in this arbour, with Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Living and Dying*, perhaps on the table before me, how solemn, how sublime, the sound of the Sabbath-bells! Whether the towers and spires of the houses of worship are shining in the sunlight, or heard each in its own region of the consecrated city, through a softening weight of mist or clouds from the windy sea!

Shepherd. For my ain pairt, Mr North, though I loe[1] the lochs, and moors, and mountains, as well as do the wild swans, the whaups, and the red-deer; yet could I, were there a necessity for't, be every bit as happy in a flat in ony timmer tenement in the darkest lane o' Auld Reekie, as in Mount Benger itsel, that blinks sae bonnily on its ain green knowe on the broad bosom o' natur. Wherever duty ca's him, and binds him doun, there may a man be happy—ay, even at the bottom o' a coal-pit, sir, that rins a mile aneath the sea, wi' waves and ships roarin and rowin a thousan' fathom ower the shaft.

North. The Philosophy of Human Life.

Shepherd. Better still—it's Religion. Woe for us were there not great happiness and great virtue in toons and cities? Let but the faculties o' the mind be occupied for sake o' the affections o' the heart, and your ee may shine as cheerfully on a smoky dead brick wa', within three yards o' your nose, as on a ledge o' livin rock formin an amphitheatre roun' a loch or an arm o' the sea. Wad I loe my wife and my weans the less in the Grassmarket[2] than in the Forest? Wad I be affected itherwise by burying ane o' them—should it so please God—

[1] *Loe*—love.

[2] In Edinburgh.

in Yarrow kirkyard than in the Greyfriars?[1] If my sons and my daughters turn out weel in life, what matters it to me if they leeve by the silver streams or the dry Nor-loch?[2] Vice and misery as readily—as inevitably—befa' mortal creturs in the sprinkled domiciles, that frae the green earth look up through amang trees to the blue heavens, as in the dungeon-like dwallins, crooded ane aboon anither, in closes whare it's aye a sort o' glimmerin nicht. And Death visits them a' alike wi' as sure a foot and as pitiless an ee. And whenever, and wherever, he comes, there's an end o' a' distinctions—o' a' differences o' outward and material things. Then we maun a' alike look for comfort to ae source—and that's no the skies theirsels, beautifu' though they may be, canopyin the dewy earth wi' a curtain wrought into endless figures, a' bricht wi' the rainbow hues, or amaist hidden by houses frae the sicht o' them that are weepin amang the dim city-lanes—for what is't in either case but a mere congregation o' vapours? But the mourner maun be able, wi' the eyes o' Faith, to pierce through it a', or else of his mournin there will be no end,—nay, nay, sir, the mair beautifu' may be the tent in which he tabernacles, the mair hideous the hell within his heart! The contrast atween the strife o' his ain distracted spirit, and the calm o' the peacefu' earth, may itherwise drive him mad, or, if not, make him curse the hour when he was born into a warld in vain so beautifu'.

North. I love to hear you discourse, James,

> "On man and nature, and on human life,
> Musing in solitude."

Methinks that Poetry, of late years, has dwelt too much on external nature. The worship of poets, if not idolatry, has been idolatrous.

Shepherd. What's the difference?

North. Nay, ask the Bishop of Oxford.[3]

Shepherd. Whew!—Not so with the poetry of Burns, and other great peasants. They pored not perpetually, sir, into streams and lochs that they might see there their ain reflec-

[1] A church and churchyard in Edinburgh.

[2] The hollow which divides the old town of Edinburgh from the new, and along which the railway now runs.

[3] Dr Lloyd, Bishop of Oxford in 1829 (in which year he died), is reported to have said of the Roman Catholic religion, that it was idolatrous, and yet not idolatry.

tion. Believe me, sir, that Narcissus[1] was nae poet.—Preserve me, what a sicht! Chucky, chucky—chucky, chucky. Oh, sir! but that's a bonny clockin hen! An' what'n a cleckin[2] she's gotten! Nearer a score nor a dizzen, and a' white as snaw!

North. Yes, James, Lancashire Ladylegs.

Shepherd. Mufties too, I declare;—are they ggem?[3]

North. You shall see.—Ralpho!

[*Flings a piece of meat towards the brood. The raven hops out of the arbour to seize it, and is instantly attacked by Ladylegs.*

Shepherd. That beats cock-fechtin! O instinck! instinck! but for thy mysterious fever hoo cauldrife the haill warld o' life!

North. 'Tis but a mere pullet, James—her first family——

Shepherd. See hoo she cuffs Sooty's chafts, till the feathers flee frae him like stour![4] Lend me your crutch, sir, that I may separate them, or faith she'll tear him intil pieces.

[*The* SHEPHERD *endeavours to separate the combatants—when Ladylegs turns against him, and drives him into the arbour.*

North. Mark how beautifully—how gracefully she shall soon subside into a calm!

Shepherd. For a pullet she has fearfu' lang spurs. Ay—yon's bonny—bonny! See till them—the bit chickenies—ane after anither, comin rinnin out frae various pairts o' the shrubbery—just like sae mony white mice—and dartin in aneath her extended wings, as she sits on the sunny gravel, beautifu' as an outlandish bird frae some Polar region, her braid breast expandin in delight as she feels a' her brood hotchin aneath her, and her lang upricht neck, flexible as that o' a serpent's, turnin her red-crested head hither and thither in a' directions, mair in pride than in fear, noo that she hears Ralpho croakin at a distance, and the wee panters beginnin again to twitter amang the feathers, lookin out noos and thens wi' their bit heads frae that cosy bield——

North. Here is a little bit bookie, which pray put into your pocket for wee Jamie—James. *The Library of Entertaining*

[1] Narcissus fell in love with his own image in the water, and pined away because he could not embrace it.—See Ovid's *Metamorphoses.*

[2] *Cleckin*—brood. [3] *Ggem*—game. [4] *Stour*—flying dust.

Knowledge, vol. i. part i., entitled "The Menageries." "Quadrupeds described and drawn from living subjects."

Shepherd. Thank ye, sir. He's[1] just perfectly mad about a' mainner o' birds and beasts—and weel I like to look at him lookin at a new pictur! Methinks I see the verra sowl growin within him as he glowers! The study o' natural history, maist assuredly, should be begun when you're a bairn, and when you're a man, you'll be hand and glove wi' a' the beasts o' the field, and birds o' the air—their various names familiar to you as household words—their habits as weel kent, or aiblins better, than your ain—sae that you hae acquaintances, and companions, and freens in the maist solitary places—and need never weary for want o' thochts and feelings even in a desert, if but ae feathery or filmy wing cross between you and the horizon.

North. There is in London, as perhaps you know, a Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, which has published very widely many admirable treatises—chiefly on Physical, though their plan comprehends Moral, subjects. For all the enlightened labours of that Society have I always prayed for success; for I desire that all men may live in the light of liberty and truth.

Shepherd. That's the redeemin trait in your character, sir. O, but you're a glorious auld Tory, Mr North. Your love for the past neither deadens your joy in the present, nor inspires you wi' fear for the future. You venerate the weather-stains on the trunk o' the tree o' knowledge, yet you rejoice to see its branches every year flinging a wider shadow.

North. Why, my dear James, the Magazine, with all its faults—which have been neither few nor small——

Shepherd. And wha ever saw either a book or a man worth praisin, that wasna as weel worth abusin? In a' great gifts there's a mixtur o' gude and evil——

North. Has spread knowledge among the people of Britain. In Theology, Philosophy, Politics, Literature, Life and Manners, Maga has, on the whole, been sound, and she has been consistent. She may be said to be in herself a Library of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge.

Shepherd. But what for ca' they this bookie "The Menagerie," sir?

[1] He—*i. e.* wee Jamie.

North. A well-chosen name, James. There, as in a Menagerie, you behold——

Shepherd. I see, I see—The woodcuts are capital—but hoo's the letterpress, sir?

North. Why, there you have upwards of two hundred closely printed pages, fine paper and type, with nearly a score of admirable representations of animals, for a couple of shillings! The cheapest thing I ever saw;—and so far from being a catch-penny—it is got up, in all its departments, by men of real talent, and knowledge of the subject.

Shepherd. It's incredibly cheap; and I fear maun be a losing concern.

North. No, James, it will be a gaining concern. The conductors of the *Library of Entertaining Knowledge* have resolved that it shall be sold at the lowest possible rate, and are little anxious about profit. But let them go on as they have begun, and I do not doubt that the sale of their monthly parts may soon reach twenty—thirty—why not forty thousand?

Shepherd. Na—na. It can never do that. Maga doesna sell that.

North. Doesn't she? That shows how little you know of Maga. By the by, James, I have not seen Maga for some months—not since Christmas. I thought her rather dull last time we had a *tête-à-tête.* I was absolutely so very ungallant as to fall asleep with her in my arms. The wick of the candle got about a foot long—the tail of her gown took fire—and Buchanan Lodge was within an ace of being reduced to ashes.

Shepherd. You would hae broken out o' the conflagration in the shape o' a phœnix, sir, "the secular bird of ages." But wha's the veece-yeditor?

North. She edits herself, James. She reminds me of an orange-tree in a conservatory—blossom and fruit beautifully blended at all times among the radiant evergreen. The sun forgets her not—and an hour now and then of open window bathes her in morning or evening dew; so gaze on her when you will, and she is bright and balmy in immortal youth.

Shepherd. You assuredly are, sir, the idlest auld sinner in a' this warld, yet you never seem weary o' life; and your face aye wears an expression as if some new thocht were visitin

your mind, and passin aff in smiles or froons, rather than words,—the aboriginal and only universal langage, o' which a body never forgets the grammar, and o' which the construction, though simple, is comprehensive, and capable o' ten thousand interpretations, according to the spirit in which it is read—mair copious either than the Hebrew or the Greek, though the roots are but few; but oh! the compound epithets, countless as the motes i' the sun e' a simmer mornin! I weel believe, sir, that a' your life lang you were never a single moment idle.

North. Idle! No, James—not even in sleep. Yet, do you know, that my sleeping seems to have no kindred with my waking soul. Seldom—I may say never—do I dream of this waking world. I have every night a new set of friends in sleep, whom I know and love. They pass away with the morning light, and never more return. Sometimes they seem as if they were phantoms I had been familiar with in youth—in boyhood—in infancy—but I know not their names, nor can recall the memory of the times or places where we had met in joy—only I feel that they are lovely, loving, and beloved! We talk of strange and delightful things, and walk overshadowed by bliss divine,—but——

Shepherd. I never met a man before that had dreams o' that kind besides mysel——

North. I never, my dear James, saw your face in a dream—yet my dreams are often perfectly happy—nor do I remember to have once dreamt of any book, or——

Shepherd. Did you never dream of being married, sir?

North. Oh dear! Oh dear! Oh dear!

Shepherd. What! You're no gaun to greet?

North. What large dewy orbs divine, angelical eyes in angelical faces, have fixed themselves upon mine, overcharged with love, as if the beings beaming there had been commissioned to pour immortal heaven into my mortal heart! No doubts, no fears, no misgivings, such as haunt and trouble all our delights in this waking world! But one pure serene flow of bliss, deep and high as the blue marbled heaven of the Dream that heard the very music of the spheres chiming, as the Paradise in which we stood, face to face with a seraph, kept floating not insensibly through the fragrant ether! The voice that syllabled such overwhelming words! Embrace-

ments that blended spirit with spirit! Perishings into intenser life! Swoonings away into spiritual regions! Re-awakenings into consciousness of breath and blood almost stopt by rapture! Then, the dying away back again—slowly but sadly—into earthly existence—till, with a beating heart, we knew again that we were the thralls of sense, and doomed to grovel like worms upon the dust—the melancholy dust of this our prison-house, from which, except in dreams, there is no escape, and from which at last we may be set free but for the eternal darkness of the grave!—Oh! James—James!—what if the soul be like the body, mortal, and all that we shall ever know of heaven, only such glorious but delusive dreams!

Shepherd. Sic visions leave just the verra opposite impression on my mind. Something divine, and therefore immortal, needs must be the spirit within us, that, when a' the senses are locked up in sleep, can yet glorify the settin sun into an apparition far mair magnificent than ever sank into the sea ahint the western mountains. But whisht! Is that an angel singin?

North. No, James; 'tis my gardener's little daughter, Flora.

Shepherd. Happy as ony burd. Music is indeed the natural voice o' joy. First, the bosom feels free frae a' anxiety—then a kind o' gladness, without ony definite cause or object, settles ower the verra essence o' life;—ere long there is a beatin and stirrin at the heart, as some suddenly-remembered thocht passes ower it like a brighter sunbeam;—by-and-by, the innocent young cretur, sittin by hersel, pu'in wi' her wee white hauns the weeds frae amang the flowers, and half loath to fling them awa, some o' them bein' sae bonny, although without ony fragrant smell, can nae langer contain the happiness flowing within her snaw-white breist, but breaks out, as noo ye hear your bonny Flora, into some auld Scottish sang, maist likely mournfu', for bliss is aye akin, sir, to grief. Ay, sir, the "Flowers o' the Forest!" And sae truely doth she sing, that I kenna whether to ca' her Sweet-voice or Fine-ear! Hasna that cadence, indeed, a dyin fa'? Nor should I wonder if the unseen cretur at this moment had her face wat wi' tears!

North. Methinks, James, I could better bear everlasting darkness than everlasting silence. The memory seems to

have more command over sights than over sounds. We can shut our eyes, yet see all nature. But music, except when it breathes, has no residing-place within the cells of the ear. So faint, so dim, the dream, it hardly can be said to be—till one single note awakes, and then the whole tune is suddenly let loose upon the soul! Blindness, methinks, I could endure and live,—but in deafness my spirit would die within me, and I should pray for death.

Shepherd. Baith maun be sair trials, yet baith are cheerfully borne. The truth is, sir, that a Christian can bear onything;—for ae moment's thocht, during his repining, tells him whence the affliction comes—and then sorrow saftens awa into resignation, and delight steals into the heart o' the maist desolate.

North. The creature now singing away at her pleasant work, a few weeks ago lost her mother. There never was a more affectionate or more dutiful child,—yet, as you said, James, Flora is now happy as a bird.

Shepherd. Yet perhaps, sir, were we to come upon her the noo—She has stopt singin a' at ance, in the verra middle o' the tune—we micht see her sittin idle amang the flowers, wi' a pale face, greetin by hersel, as she keeps lookin at her black gown, and thinkin on that burial-day, or her father's countenance, that sin' syne has seldom brichtened.

North. There is something most affecting in the natural sorrows of poor men, my dear Shepherd, as, after a few days' wrestling with affliction, they appear again at their usual work—melancholy, but not miserable.

Shepherd. You ken a gude deal, sir, about the life and character o' the puir; but then it's frae philosophical and poetical observation and sympathy—no frae art-and-part participation, like mine, in their merriment and their meesery. Folk in what they ca' the upper classes o' society, a' look upon life, mair or less, as a scene o' enjoyment, and amusement, and delicht. They get a' selfish in their sensibilities, and would fain mak the verra laws o' natur obedient to their wull. Thus they cherish and encourage habits o' thocht and feeling that are maist adverse to obedience and resignation to the decrees o' the Almighty—when these decrees dash in pieces small the idols o' their earthly worship.

North. Too true, alas! my dearest Shepherd.

Shepherd. Pity me! how they moan, and groan, and greet, and wring their hauns, and tear their hair, even auld folk their thin grey hair, when death comes into the bedroom, or the verra drawing-room, and carries aff in his clutches some wee bit spoiled bairn, yaummerin[1] amang its playthings, or keepin its mither awake a' nicht by its perpetual cries!

North. Touch tenderly, James—on——

Shepherd. Ane wad think that nae parents had ever lost a child afore—yet hoo mony a sma' funeral do you see ilka day pacin alang the streets unheeded on, amang the carts and hackney-coaches!

North. Unheeded, as a party of upholsterer's men carrying furniture to a new house.

Shepherd. There is little or naething o' this thochtless, this senseless clamour in kintra-houses, when the cloud o' God's judgment passes ower them, and orders are gien for a grave to be dug in the kirkyard. A' the house is hushed and quate—just the same as if the patient were still sick, and no gane[2] awa—the father, and perhaps the mother, the brothers, and the sisters, are a' gaun about their ordinary business, wi' grave faces nae doubt, and some o' them now and then dichtin the draps frae their een; but, after the first black day, little audible greetin, and nae indecent and impious outcries.

North. The angler calling in at the cottage would never know that a corpse was the cause of the calm.

Shepherd. Rich folk, if they saw sic douce,[3] composed ongoings, wad doubtless wonder to think hoo callous, hoo insensible were the puir! That natur had kindly denied to them those fine feelings that belong to cultivated life! But if they heard the prayer o' the auld man at nicht, when the survivin family were on their knees around the wa', and his puir wife neist him in the holy circle, they wad ken better, and confess that there is something as sublime as it is sincere and simple, in the resignation and piety of those humble Christians, whose doom it is to live by the sweat o' their brow, and who are taught, almost frae the cradle to the grave, to feel every hour they breathe, that all they enjoy, and all they suffer, is dropt doun frae the hand o' God, almost as visibly as the dew or the hail,—and hence their faith in things unseen and eternal, is firm as their belief in things seen and temporal—and that they a' feel, sir, when lettin doun the coffin into the grave!

[1] *Yaummerin*—fretting. [2] *Gane*—gone. [3] *Douce*—sedate.

North. Take another glass, my dear friend, of Mrs Gentle's elder-flower wine.

Shepherd. Frontignac! But, harken! There, again, the bit happy motherless oretur is beguiled into anither sang! Her ain voice, sir, brings comfort frae a' the air around, even as if it were an angel's sang, singin to her frae the heart o' heaven!

North. From how many spiritual sources come assuagings of our most mortal griefs!

Shepherd. It's a strathspey!—I canna understand the want o' an ear. When I'm alone, I'm aye either whistlin, or singin, or hummin, till I fa' into thocht; and then baith thochts and feelings are swayed, if I'm no sair mista'en, in their main current by the tune, whether gay or sad, that your heart has been harpin on; so, if I hadna a gude ear, the loneliness o' the hills wad be unco wearisome, unvisited by involuntary dreams about indefinite things! Do folk aye think in words?

North. Generally, I suspect.

Shepherd. Yet the thochts maun come first, surely. I fancy words and thochts fly intil ane anither's haun's. A thousan' thochts may be a' wrapt up in ae wee bit word—just as a thousand beauties in ae wee bit flower. They baith expand out into beauty—and then there's nae end to the creations o' the eye and the ear—for the soul sits ahint the pupil o' the tane, and the drum o' the tither, and takin a hint frae tone or hue, expawtiates ower the universe.

North. Scottish Music, my dear James, is to me rather monotonous.

Shepherd. So is Scottish Poetry, sir. It has nae great range; but human natur never wearies o' its ain prime elementary feelings. A man may sit a haill nicht by his ingle, wi' his wife and bairns, without either thinkin or feelin muckle; and yet he's perfectly happy till bed-time, and says his prayers wi' fervent gratitude to the Giver o' a' mercies. It's only whan he's beginnin to tire o' the hummin o' the wheel, or o' his wife flytin at the weans, or o' the weans upsettin the stools, or ruggin ane anither's hair, that his fancy takes a very poetical flight into the regions o' the Imagination. Sae lang's the heart sleeps amang its affections, it dwalls upon few images; but these images may be infinitely varied; and, when expressed in words, the variety will be felt. Sae that, after a', it's scarcely correct to ca' Scottish Poetry monotonous, or

Scottish Music either, ony mair than you would ca' a kintra level, in bonny gentle ups and downs, or a sky dull, though the clouds were neither mony nor multiform; a' depends upon the spirit. Twa-three notes may mak a maist beautifu' tune; twa-three woody knowes a bonny landscape; and there are some bit streams amang the hills, without ony striking or very peculiar scenery, that it's no possible to dauner along at gloamin without feelin them to be visionary, as if they flowed through a land o' glamour. It's the same thing wi' faces. Little depends on the features; a' on the composition. There is a nameless something that tells, when the colour o' the een, and o' the hair, and o' the cheeks, and the roundin aff o' the chin rin intil the throat, and then awa aff, lik a wave o' the sea, until the breast is a' harmonious as music; and leaves ane lookin at the lasses as if they were listenin "to a melody that's sweetly play'd in tune!" Sensibility feels a' this; Genius creautes it; and in Poetry it dwells, like the charm in the Amulet.

North. James, look through the loophole. Do you not think, my dear Shepherd, that the character of a man is known in his works?

Shepherd. Gurney! as I'm a Christian! That's really too bad, sir. A body canna sit doun in an arbour, to crack an hour wi' an auld freen, but there is a short-haun writer at your lug, jottin you doun for extension at his leisure—and convertin you frae a preevat character at the Lodge, intil a public ane in thae confounded, thae accursed Noctes Ambrosianæ.

North. Gurney, leave out that last epithet.

Shepherd. If you do I'll fell[1] you. But, Mr North, many o' my freens[2]——

North. I know it, my dear James—but treat them with contempt, or shall I take up a few of them by the scroof[3] of the neck, with my glove on, as one would take up a small scotched viper, and fling him over the wall, to crawl a few inches, before death, on the dust of the road?

Shepherd. Their vulgar venom shall never poison my ear, my dear sir. But had natur but gien them fangs, hoo the reptiles wad bite! There's a speeder, sir, on your chin.

North. I love spiders. Look at the lineal descendant of

[1] *Fell*—knock down.

[2] The Shepherd would have continued—"object to my being made so free with in the Noctes."

[3] *Scroof*—nape.

Arachne, how beautifully she descends from the chin of Christopher North to the lower region of our earth!—But speaking of public and private characters——

Shepherd. That's a puzzlin question, sir.—Let's speak o' Poets. Ae thing's certain; that afore you can express ony ae single thocht or feelin in poetry, you maun hae had it in your spirit or heart, strong, distinct, fresh, and bricht, in real leevin experience and actual natur. It maun hae been, whether originatin entirely in yoursel, or transfused through you by anither, your ain *bonny feedy*[1] possession and property —else it'ill no be worth a strae in verse. Eh?

North. Granted.

Shepherd. Secondly, however a poet may write weel by fits and starts, in a sort o' inspiration like, thae fits and starts themsels can only come frae a state o' the speerit habitually meditative, and rejoicin in its ain free moods. Therefore, however muckle they may astonish you that doesna ken him, they are just as characteristic o' his natur as the rest o' his mair ordinary proceedings, and maun be set doun to the score o' his natural and indigenous constitution. Eh?

North. Granted.

Shepherd. What a poet maist dearly and devoutly loves, about that wull he, of course, write the feck[2] o' his poetry. His poetry, therefore, wull contain mair of his deeper, inner self, than onything else can do in this warld—that's to say, if he be a real poet, and no a pretender. For I'll defy ony human cretur, unless he has some sinister end to gain, to keep writin, or speakin either, a' his life lang about things that dinna constitute his chief happiness. Eh?

North. Granted.

Shepherd. Fourthly, if his poetry be gude, and if the states o' sowl formin the staple o't be also gude, and if his poems be sae numerous and important as to hae occupied him mair or less a' his life lang, then I should like to know on what ither principle he can be a bad man, except that he be a hypocrite —but if he be a hypocrite, that'ill be seen at ance in his poetry, for it'ill be bad—but then the verra reverse, by the supposition, is the case, for his poetry is gude; and therefore, if he be na a gude man, taken on the whole, a' this warld and this life's delusion thegither, black's white, het cauld, virtue vice, and frae sic a senseless life as the present there can be nae reason

[1] *Bonâ fide.* [2] *Feck*—greater part.

to believe in a future. And thus you end in a denial of the Deity, and avoo yoursel to be an atheist. Eh?

North. Granted almost.

Shepherd. Fifthly, sir—What's this I was gaun to say? Ou ay. A man's real character, then, is as truly shown in his poetry as in his religion. When he is poetical and when he is religious, he is in his highest states. He exists at his best. Then and therein is the perfection o' his natur. But it disna follow—by no mainner o' means—but that the puir mortal cretur may be untrue to himsel—untrue baith to his poetry and to his religion—and ower aften stain himsel wi' a' sorts o' vices and crimes. King David did sae—yet wha ever doubted either his poetry or his religion—or whare would you look for either, or for the man himsel, but in his Psalms. Eh?

North. Granted, James—granted.

Shepherd. If the Bard o' virtue and morality, and religion and immortal truth, sink doun frae his elevation amang the stars, and soil his spirit wi' the stain o' clay, what does that prove but that he is not a seraph, inspired though he be, but like the sumphs around him, a sinner—Oh! a greater sinner than they, because tumblin frae a loftier height, and sinkin deeper into the mire that bedabbles his glorious wings, that shall require other waters to cleanse them than ever flowed frae Helicon.

North. These are solemn—yea, mournful truths.

Shepherd. Show me ae leevin mortal man, consistent wi' himsel, and at a' times subject to the rule o' life as it is revealed in Scripture, and then tell me that a good, a great poet is not truly shown in his warks, and I will believe you—but not till then—for the humblest and the highest spirit, if tried by that test, will baith be found wantin; and a' that I ask for either the ane or the ither set o' sinners is—justice.

North. Yet something there seems to be unexplained in the subject.

Shepherd. There maun aye be left something unexplained in every subject, sir. But hear till me ae minute langer. A man may deliver himsel up to poetry wi' too total a devotion—sae that he comes to dislike common life. There's much in common life, sir, as you ken, that's painfu', and a sair restraint on the wull. Folk maun learn not only to thole, but absolutely to love, many things in ithers that would cut but a poor figure

in poetry; and to cherish many things in themsels that hae nae relation whatsomever wi' the imagination. Every head o' a house maun be sensible o' that, wha does his duty as a husband, a father, a master, and a friend. Let these things be forgotten, or felt to be burdensome, and the mind that loves at all times to expatiate freely in a warld o' its ain—even though the elements o't be a' human—is under a strong temptation to do sae—and then the life o' the man becomes defective and disordered. In such cases, the poet who loves virtue in her ideal beauty, and worships her in spirit and in truth, may frae her authority yet be a recreant—in real life. That's a short solution o' much that's puzzlin and perplexin in the conduct o' men o' genius; but there's anither key to the difficulty, sir—only I fear I'm gettin tedious and tiresome.

North. No—no—my dear James—go on.

Shepherd. There's danger in the indulgence of feelings, let them be even the highest and the holiest o' our nature, without constant corresponding practice to prevent their degeneration into mere aimless impulses — and these aimless impulses are found but a weak protection against the temptations that assail us in this world.[1] Why, sir, I verily believe that religion itsel may be indulged in to excess, when frequent ca's are no made on men to act, as well as to think and feel. The man of religion is perfectly sincere, though he be found wanting when put to trial—just like the man of genius. Well-doing is necessary.——

North. There you have hit the nail on the head, James.

Shepherd. Shall we say then, in conclusion, that the true character of a true poet is always exhibited in his poetry—Eh? It must be so—Burns, Byron, Cowper, Wordsworth, are all, in different ways, proofs of the truth of the apothegm.

North. But what think you, James, of the vulgar belief, that a bad private may be a good public character?

Shepherd. That it is indeed a most vulgar belief. A bad private character is a blackguard—and how could a blackguard make a gude public character? Eh?

[1] "Habits of virtue," says Dugald Stewart, "are not to be formed in retirement, but by mingling in the scenes of active life; and an habitual attention to exhibitions of fictitious distress is not merely useless to character, but positively hurtful."—*Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind*, vol. i. p. 526, sixth edition.

North. That's a poser.

Shepherd. Only you see there's scarcely sic a thing as morality in political life; or if there be, it's anither code, and gangs by the name o' Expediency. A blackguard may be a gey gude judge o' maist kinds o' expediency—but whenever the question gets dark and difficult; you maun hae recourse to the licht o' conscience, and what becomes o' the blackguard then, sir? He gangs blind-faulded ower a precipice, and is dashed to pieces. But besides expediency, there's what they ca' honour—national honour,—and though I scarcely see hoo it is, yet great blackguards in private life hae a sense o' that, and wadna, but under great temptation, sacrifeece't. A bribe, however, administered to their besettin sin, whatever that may be, will generally do the business, and they will sell even the freedom of their country for women or gold.

North. I do not well know what to think of public men just now, James.

Shepherd. They seem to be a puir pitifu' pack the maist o' them, especially, wi' some twa or three exceptions—our ain Forty-Five.[1] Whenever a man past thirty tells me that he has changed his opinion about ony given thing in ony given time, gude mainners alane hinder me frae tellin him that he is a leear. — But let's hae nae politics. What the deevil are you thinkin about that you're no attendin to me speakin? Dinna be absent. For Heaven's sake gie ower that face. Ay, there the black thunder-cloud has passed awa, and your benign and beautifu' auld physiognomy ance mair looks like itsel in the licht o' heaven.

North. I chanced to look at this ring——

Shepherd. What? The ane on your wee finger? The finest diamond ever glittered.

North. And the image of the Noble Being, in remembrance of whom I have worn it for twenty years, rose up before me — methought in the very attitude in which he used of old to address a public assembly—the right arm extended—so——

Shepherd. Few things in this weary warld sae delichtfu' as Keepsakes! Nor do they ever, to my heart at least, nor to my een, ever lose their tender, their powerfu' charm!

North. How slight — how small — how tiny a memorial, saves a beloved friend from oblivion—worn on the finger——

[1] At this time there were *forty-five* members of Parliament for Scotland. By the Reform Bill of 1832 their number was increased to fifty-three.

Shepherd. Or close to the heart! Especially if he be dead! Nae thocht sae unsupportable as that o' entire, total, blank forgetfulness—when the cretur that ance laucht, and sang, and wept to us, close to our side, or in our verra arms, is as if her smiles, her voice, her tears, her kisses, had never been! She and them a' swallowed up in the dark nothingness o' the dust!

North. It is not safe to say, James, that any one single thought that ever was in the mind is forgotten. It may be gone, utterly gone—like a bird out of a cage. But a thought is not like a bird, a mortal thing; and why may it not, after many many long years have past by — so many and so long that we look with a sort of quiet longing on the churchyard heaps—why may it not return all at once from a "far countrée," fresh, and fair, and bright, as of yore, when first it glided into being, up from among the heaven-dew-opened pores in the celestial soil of the soul, and "possessed it wholly," as if there for ever were to have been its blissful abiding-place, in those sunny regions where sin and sorrow as yet had shown their evil eyes, but durst not venture in, to scare off from the paradise even one of all its divinest inmates! Why may not the thought, I ask, return—or rather, rise up again on the spirit, from which it has never flown, but lain hushed in that mysterious dormitory, where ideas sleep, all ready to awake again into life, even when most like death,—for Ideas are as birds of passage, and they are also akin to the winter-sleepers, so that no man comprehends their exits or their entrances, or can know whether any one of all the tribe is at any one moment a million of miles off, or wheeling round his head, and ready to perch on his hand![1]

Shepherd. Alloo me, sir, noo to press you to anither glass o' Mrs Gentle's elder-flower wine.

[1] "It is probable," says S. T. Coleridge, "that all thoughts are in themselves imperishable; and that if the intelligent faculty should be rendered more comprehensive, it would require only a different and apportioned organisation—the *body celestial* instead of the *body terrestrial*—to bring before every human soul the collective experience of its whole past existence. And this, perchance, is the dread book of judgment, in whose mysterious hieroglyphics every idle word is recorded! Yea, in the very nature of a living spirit, it may be more possible that heaven and earth should pass away, than that a single act, a single thought, should be loosened or lost from that living chain of causes, to all whose links, conscious or unconscious, the free-will, our only absolute *self*, is co-extensive and co-present."—*Biographia Literaria*, vol. i. p. 115, first edition.

North. Frontignac!—Now, do you, James, take up the ball —for I'm out of breath.

Shepherd. To please you, sir, I hae read lately—or at least tried to read—thae books, and lectures, and what not, on the Association o' Ideas,—and yon explanations and theories of Tammas Broon's, and Mr Dugald Stewart's, and Mr Alison's, and the lave, seem, at the time the volume's lyin open afore you, rational aneuch — sae that you canna help believin that each o' them has flung doun a great big bunch o' keys, wi' a clash on the table, that 'ill enable you to open a' the locks o' a' the doors o' the Temple o' Natur. But, dog on't! the verra first lock you try, the key 'ill no fit! Or if it fits, you cannot get it to turn roun', though you chirt wi' your twa hands till you're baith black and red in the face, and desperate angry. A' the Metapheesicks that ever were theoreezed into a system o' Philosophy 'ill never clear up the mystery o' memory ae hue, or enable me nor onybody else to understand hoo, at ae time, ye may knock on your head wi' your loof or nieve till it's sair, without awaukenin a single thocht, ony mair than you would awauken a dormouse in the heart o' the bole of an aik,[1] by tappin on the rough hide; while, at another time, you canna gie your head a jee[2] to the ae side, without tens o' thousans o' thochts fleein out o' your mouth, your nose, and your een, just like a swarm o' bees playin whurr—and bum—into the countless sky, when by chance you hae upset a skep, or the creturs o' their ain accord, and in the passion o' their ain instinck, are aff after their Queen, and havin tormented half the kintra-side for hours, a' at last settle doun on the branch o' an apple-tree perhaps — the maist unlikely, to all appearance, they could find — and perplexin to the man wi' the ladder, and the towel outower his face, — because the Queen-Bee preferred, for some inscrutable reason, that ackward branch to a' ither resting-places on which she could hae rested her doup, although it was physically and morally impossible that she could ever hae seen the tree afore, never havin been alloo'd to set her fit[3] ayont the door o' the skep, for reasons best known to her subjects, or at least her Ministers, wha, unlike some ithers I micht mention, dinna despise the voice o' the people, even though it should be nae louder nor a murmur or a hum!

[1] *Aik*—oak. [2] *A jee*—a turn. [3] *Fit*—foot.

North. Come, James, no politics—keep to philosophy.

Shepherd. The Queen-Thocht's the same's the Queen-Bee—and when she's let lowse intil heaven, out flees the haill swarm o' winged fancies at her tail, wi' a noise like thunder.

North. But we were speaking of Keepsakes——

Shepherd. And sae we are still. I see the road windin alang on the richt haun yonner—but we're like passengers loupin aff the tap o' the cotch at the fit o' a hill, and divin devious through a wood by a short cut, to catch her again afore she get through the turnpike.

North. The pleasantest way either of travel or of talk.

Shepherd. Ten hunder thousan' million thochts and feelings, and fancies, and ideas, and emotions, and passions and what not, a' lie thegither, heads and thraws, in the great, wide, saft, swellin, four-posted, mony-pillowed bed o' the Imagination. Joys, sorrows, hopes, fears, raptures, agonies, shames, horrors, repentances, remorses—strange bed-fellows indeed, sir—some skuddy-naked,[1] some clothed in duds, and some gorgeously apparelled, ready to rise up and sit down at feasts and festivals——

North. Stop, James, stop——

Shepherd. 'Tis the poet alane, sir, that can speak to ony purpose about sic an association o' ideas as that, sir; he kens at every hotch amang them, whilk is about to start up like a sheeted cadaver shiverin cauldrife as the grave, or a stoled queen, a rosy, balmy, fragrant-bosomed queen, wi' lang, white, satin arms, to twine roun' your verra sowl! But the metaphyseecian, what kens he about the matter? Afore he has putten the specks astraddle o' his nose, the floor o' the imagination is a' astir like the foaming sea—and aiblins hushed again into a calm as deep as that o' a sunny hill, where lichts and lambs are dancin thegither on the greensward, and to the music of the lilting linties amang the golden groves o' broom, proud to see their yellow glories reflected in the pools, like blossoms bloomin in anither warld belonging to the Naïads and the mermaids!

North. But, James, we were speaking of Keepsakes.

Shepherd. And sae we are still. For what is a keepsake but a material memorial o' a spiritual happenin? Something substantial, through whose instrumentality the shadowy past

[1] *Skuddy-naked*—stark-naked.

may resettle on the present—till a bit metal, or a bit jewel, or a bit lock o' hair, or a bit painted paper, shall suddenly bring the tears into your startled and softened een, by a dear, delightfu', overwhelmin image o' Life-in-Death!

North. Of all keepsakes, memorials, relics, most tenderly, most dearly, most devoutly, James, do I love a little lock of hair!—and oh! when the head it beautified has long mouldered in the dust, how spiritual seems the undying glossiness of the sole remaining ringlet! All else gone to nothing—save and except that soft, smooth, burnished, golden, and glorious fragment of the apparelling that once hung in clouds and sunshine over an angel's brow!

Shepherd. Ay—as poor Kirke White says—

> "It must have been a lovely head
> That had such lovely hair!"

But dinna think ony mair upon her the noo, sir. What fules we are to summon up shadows and spectres frae the grave, to trouble——

North. Her image troubles me not. Why should it? Methinks I see her walking yonder, as if fifty years of life were extinguished, and that were the sun of my youth! Look—look—James!—a figure all arrayed, like Innocence, in white garments! Gone—gone! Yet such visions are delightful visitants—and the day, and the evening, and the night, are all sanctified on which the apparition comes and goes with a transient yet immortal smile!

Shepherd. Ay, sir! a lock o' hair, I agree wi' you, is far better than ony pictur. It's a pairt o' the beloved object hersel—it belanged to the tresses that aften, lang, lang ago, may hae a' been suddenly dishevelled, like a shower o' sunbeams, ower your beatin breast! But noo solemn thochts sadden the beauty ance sae bricht—sae refulgent; the langer you gaze on't, the mair and mair pensive grows the expression of the holy relic—it seems to say, almost upbraidingly, "Weep'st thou no more for me?" and then, indeed, a tear, true to the imperishable affection in which all nature seemed to rejoice, "when life itself was young," bears witness that the object towards which it yearned is no more forgotten, now that she has been dead for so many many long weary years, than she was forgotten during an hour of absence, that came like a

passing cloud between us and the sunshine of her living, her loving smiles!

North. Were a picture perfectly like our deceased friend—no shade of expression, however slight, that was his, awanting—none there, however slight, that belonged not to the face that has faded utterly away—then might a picture——

Shepherd. But then that's never the case, sir. There's aye something wrang, either about the mouth, or the een, or the nose—or, what's warst o' a', you canna fin' faut wi' ony o' the features for 'no being like; and yet the painter, frae no kennin the delightfu' character o' her or him that was sittin till him, leaves out o' the face the entire speerit—or aiblins, that the portrait mayna be deficient in expression, he pits in a sharp clever look, like that o' a blue-stocking, into saft, dewy, divine een, swimmin wi' sowl! spoils the mouth a'thegither by puckerin't up at the corners, sae that a' the innocent smiles, mantlin there like kisses, tak flight frae sic prim lips, cherry-ripe though they be; and, blin' to the delicate, straught, fine-edged hicht o' her Grecian—ay, her Grecian nose—what does the fule dò, but raises up the middle o' the brig, or—may Heaven never forgie him—cocks it up at the pint sae, that you can see up the nostrils—a thing I dinna like at a'; and for this, which he ca's a portrait, and proposes sendin to the Exhibition, he has the conscience to charge you—withouten the frame—the reasonable soum o' ae hundred pounds sterling!

North. Next to a lock of hair, James, is a brooch, or a ring, that has been worn by a beloved friend.

Shepherd. Just sae; and then you can put the hair intil the brooch or the ring—or baith—and wear them on your finger and on your breast a' nicht lang, dream, dream, dreamin awa back into the vanished world o' unendurable, and incomprehensible, and unutterable things!

North. Or what think you of a book, my dear James——

Shepherd. Ay, a bit bookie o' ane's ain writin, a poem pérhaps, or a garland o' ballants and sangs, with twa-three lovin verses on the fly-leaf, by way o' inscription—for there's something unco affectionate in manuscripp—bound on purpose for her in delicate white silver-edged cauf, wi' flowers alang the border, or the figure o' a heart perhaps in the middle, pierced wi' a dart, or breathin out flames like a volcawno.

North. A device, James, as natural as it is new.

Shepherd. Nane o' your sneers, you auld satirist. Whether natural or unnatural, new or auld, the device, frae being sae common, canna be far wrang—for a' the warld has been in love at ae time or ither o' its life, and kens best hoo to express its ain passion. What see you ever in love-sangs that's at a' new? Never ae single word. It's just the same thing ower again, like a vernal shower patterin amang the buddin woods. But let the lines come sweetly and saftly, and a wee wildly too, frae the lips o' Genius, and they shall delight a' mankind, and womankind too, without ever wearyin them, whether they be said or sung. But try to be original—to keep aff a' that ever has been said afore, for fear o' plagiarism, or in ambition o' originality, and your poem 'ill be like a bit o' ice that you hae taken into your mouth unawaures for a lump o' white sugar.

North. Now, my dear James, the hour is elapsed, and we must to our toilet. The Gentles will be here in a jiffey,[1] and I know not how it is, but intimate as we are, and attached by the kindest ties, I never feel at my ease in their company, in the afternoon, unless my hair be powdered, my ruffles on, and my silver buckles.

Shepherd. Do you mean the buckles on your shoon, or the buckles on your breeks?

North. My shoon, to be sure. James—James!

Shepherd. I'll tell you a secret, sir—and yet it's nae great secret either; for I'm o' opinion that we a' ken our ain hearts, only we dinna ken what's best for them,—you're in love wi' Mrs Gentle. Na, na—dinna hang doun your head, and blush in that gate; there's nae harm in't—nae sin—only you should marry her, sir; for I never saw a woman sae in love wi' a man in a' my born days.

North. I cannot bring myself to think so, my dear James.

Shepherd. Tuts. You canna attempt to walk across the room, that her twa een are no followin you on your crutch, wi' a mixed expression o' love, and fear lest you should fa' and dislocate your knee-pan, or——

North. Crutch! Why, you know, James, well enough, that for the last twelve months I have worn it, not for use, but ornament. I am thinking of laying it aside entirely.

[1] *In a jiffey*—immediately.

Shepherd. " And capering nimbly in a lady's chamber!" Be persuaded by me, sir, and attempt nae sic thing. Naebody supposes that your constitution's broken in upon, sir, or that you're subject to a general frailty o' natur. The gout's a local complaint wi' you—and what the waur is a man for ha'in an occasional pain in his tae? Besides, sir, there's a great deal in habit—and Mrs Gentle has been sae lang accustomed to look at you on the crutch, that there's nae saying hoo it micht be, were you to gie ower that captivatin hobble, and figure on the floor like a dancing-master. At your time o' life, you could never howp to be an extremely—an uncommonly active man on your legs—and therefore it's better, it's wiser, and it's safer, to continue a sort o' lameter, and keep to the crutch.

North. But does she absolutely follow me with her eyes?

Shepherd. She just reminds me, sir, when you're in the room wi' her, o' a bit image o' a duck soomin about in a bowl o' water at the command o' a loadstane. She's really a bonny body—and no sae auld either. Naebody 'ill laugh at the marriage—and I should not be surprised if you had——

North. " The world's dread laugh," as it is called, has no terrors to me, my dear James——

Shepherd. Nane whatever—I weel ken that; and I think I see you sittin wi' your pouthered head, aside her in the chay drawn by four blood horses, cavin their heads till the foam flees ower the hedges, a' adorned wi' white ribbons, and the postilions wi' great braid favours on their breasts like roses or stars, smackin their whups, while the crood huzzaws you aff to your honeymoon amang the mountains——

North. I will pop the question, this very evening.

Shepherd. Just tak it for granted that the marriage is to be as sune as the settlements can be drawn up,—look to her, and speak to her, and press her haun, whenever she puts her arm intil yours, as if it was a' fixed—and she'll sune return a bit wee saft uncertain squeeze—and then by-and-by——

North. I'll begin this very evening——

Shepherd. Saftly—saftly—moderate your transports. You maun begin by degrees, and no be ower tender upon her a' at ance, or she'll wunner what's the maitter wi' you—suspeck that you're mad, or hae been takin a drap drink—and are only makin a fule o' her——

North. Ha! yonder she is, James. Gentle by name and gentle by nature! To her delicate touch the door seems to open as of itself, and to turn on its hinges——

Shepherd. As if they were iled.[1] Wait a wee, and maybe you'll hear her bang't after her like a clap o' thunder.

North. Hush! impious man. How meekly the most lovable matron rings the door-bell! What can that lazy fellow, John, be about, that he does not fly to let the angel in?

Shepherd. Perhaps cleanin the shoon, or the knives and forks. Noo, mind you, behave yoursel. Come awa.

[*The* SHEPHERD *takes the crutch, and* MR NORTH *walks towards the Lodge as fresh as a five-year-old.*

[1] *Iled*—oiled.

XXII.

(DECEMBER 1829.)

The Snuggery.—Time, seven o'clock.

NORTH *and* SHEPHERD.

Shepherd. O, sir! but there's something delightfu' in coal-fire glimmerin and gloomin, breaking out every noo and then into a flickering bleeze; and whenever ane uses the poker into a sudden illumination, vivifyin the pictured paper on the wa's, and settin a' the range o' lookin-glasses a-low, like sae mony beacons kindled on the taps o' hills, burnin awa to ane anither ower a' the kintra-side, on the birthday nicht o' the Duke o' Buccleuch, or that o' his marriage wi' that fair English Leddy[1]—God bless them baith, and send them in gude time a circle o' bauld sons and bonny dochters, to uphaud the stately an' noble house o' the King o' the Border!

North. Amen. James—a caulker.

Shepherd. That speerit's far aboon proof. There's little difference atween awka veety an' awka fortis.[2] Ay, ma man, that gars your een water. Dicht them wi' the doylez, and then tak a mouthfu' out o' the jug to moderate the intensity o' the pure cretur. Haud, haud! it's no sma' yill, but strong toddy, sir. (*Aside*)—The body 'ill be fou afore aught o'clock.

North. This jug, James, is rather wishy-washy; confound me if I don't suspect it is milk and water!

Shepherd. Plowp in some speerit. Let me try't. It 'ill do noo, sir. That's capital boilin water, and tholes double its ain wecht o' cauld Glenlivet. Let's dook in[3] the thermometer.

[1] In 1829 the Duke of Buccleuch married Lady Charlotte Anne Thynne, daughter of the Marquess of Bath.

[2] *Aqua vitæ* and *aqua fortis*.

[3] *Dook in*—plunge in.

Up, you see, to twa hunder and twunty, just the proper toddy pitch. It's mirawculous!

North. What sort of a night out of doors, James?

Shepherd. A fine night, sir, and like the season. The wund's due east, and I'se warrant the ships at anchor in the Roads are a' rather coggly, wi' their nebs doun the Firth, like sae mony rocking-horses. On turnin the corner o' Picardy, a blash o' sleet like a verra snawba' amaist knocked my head aff my shouthers; and as for my hat, if it meet with nae interruption, it maun be weel on to West-Craigs by this time, for it flew aff in a whurlwund. Ye canna see the sleet for the haur;[1] the ghastly lamps are amaist entirely overpoored by the whustlin darkness; and as for moon and stars, they're a' dead and buried, and we never mair may wutness their resurrection: Auld-women frae chimley-taps are clytin[2] wi' a crash into every area, and the deevil's tirlin[3] the kirks outower a' the Synods o' Scotland. Whisht! Is that thunner?

North. I fear scarcely—but the roar in the vent is good, James, and tells of tempest. Would to heaven I were at sea!

Shepherd. That's impious. Yet you micht aiblins be safe aneuch in a bit cockle-shell o' an open boat—for some folk are born no to be drooned——

North. There goes another old-woman![4]

Shepherd. O but the Yarrow wull be a' ae red roar the noo, frae the Loch to the Ettrick. Yet wee Jamie's soun' asleep in his crib by this time, and dreamin, it may be, o' paiddlin amang the mennows in the silver sandbanks o' simmer, whare the glassy stream is nae higher than his knee; or o' chasin amang the broom the young linties sent by the sunshine, afore their wings are weel feathered, frae their mossy cradle in the briar-bush, and able to flee just weel aneuch to wile awa on and on, after their chirpin flutter, my dear wee canty callant, chasin first ane and then anither, on wings just like their ain, the wings o' joy, love, and hope; fauldin them, in a disappointment free frae ony taint o' bitterness, when a' the burdies hae disappeared, and his een, as he sits doun on the knowe, fix themselves wi' a new pleasure on the bonny bands o' gowans croodin round his feet.

North. A bumper, my dear Shepherd, to Mount Benger.

[1] *Haur*—flying mist.
[2] *Clytin*—falling.
[3] *Tirlin*—unroofing.
[4] *Old-woman*—chimney-can.

Shepherd. Thank ye, sir—thank ye. Oh! my dear sir, but ye hae a gude heart, sound at the core as an apple on the sunny south side o' the tree—and ruddy as an apple, sir, is your cheek——

North. Yes, James, a life of temperance preserves——

Shepherd. Help yoursel, and put ower the jug. There's twunty gude years o' wear and tear in you yet, Mr North—but what for wunna ye marry? Dinna be frichtened—it's naething ava—and it often grieves my heart to think o' you lyin your lane in that state-bed, which canna be less than seven feet wide, when the General's widow——

North. I have long wished for an opportunity of confiding to you a secret which——

Shepherd. A sacret! Tell nae sacret to me—for I never a' my life could sleep wi' a sacret in my head, ony mair than wi' the lug-ache. But if you're merely gaun to tell me that ye hae screwed up your courage at last to marry her, say't, do't and be dune wi't, for she's a comely and a cosy cretur yon Mrs Gentle, and it 'ill do my een gude to see you marchin up wi' her, haun in haun to the Hymeneal Altar.

North. On Christmas day, my dear James, we shall be one spirit.

Shepherd. And ae flesh. Hurraw! hurraw! hurraw! Gie's your haun on that, my auld hearty! What a grau' echo's in yon corner o' the roof! hear till 't smackin loofs after us, as if Cupid himsel were in the cornice!

North. You must write our Epithalamium.

Shepherd. That I wull, wi' a' my birr, and sae wull Delta, and sae wull the Doctor,[1] and sae, I'm sure, wull Mr Wudsworth; and I can answer for Sir Walter——

North. Who has kindly promised to give away the Bride.

Shepherd. I could greet to think that I canna be the Best Man.[2]

North. Tickler has——

Shepherd. Capital—capital! I see him—look, there he is—wi' his speck-and-span-new sky-blue coat wi' siller buttons, snaw-white waistcoat wi' gracefu' flaps, licht casimer knee-brecks wi' lang ties, flesh-coloured silk-stockings wi' flowered gushets, pumps brushed up to a perfeck polish a' roun' the buckles crystal-set, a dash o' pouther in his hair, een bricht

[1] Doctor Maginn. [2] The bridegroom's man.

as diamonds, the face o' him like the verra sun, chin shaven smooth as satin, mouth—saw ye ever sic teeth in a man's head at his time o' life—mantling wi' jocund benisons, and the haill Feegur o' the incomparable Fallow, frae tap to tae, sax feet fowre inches and a hauf gude measure, instinck wi' condolence and congratulation, as if at times he were almost believing Buchanan Lodge was Southside — that he was changin places wi' you, in a sweet sort o' jookery-pawkery — that he was Christopher North, and Mrs Gentle on the verra brink o' becoming Mrs Tickler?

North. James, you make me jealous.

Shepherd. For Heaven's sake, sir, dinna split on that rock. Remember Othello, and hoo he smothered his wife wi' the bowster. But saft lie the bowster aneath your twa happy heads, and pleasantly may your goold watch keep tick-tickin throughout the night, in accompaniment wi' the beatin's o' your twa worthy and wedded hearts.

North. Methinks, James, the wind has shifted round to the——

Shepherd.—

> "O' a' the airts the wund can blaw,
> I dearly loe the west,
> For there the bonny *widow* lives,
> The ane that I loe best!"

Eh?

North. Let us endeavour to change the subject. How many poets, think ye, James, at the present moment, may be in Edinburgh?

Shepherd. Baith sexes? Were I appointed, during a season o' distress, to the head o' the Commissawriat Department in a great Bane-Soup-Dispensary, for behoof and in behalf o' the inspired pairt o the poppilation o' Embro', I think it wadna be safe to take the average — supposing the dole to each beggar to be twice a-day—aneath twunty thoosand rawtions.

North. The existence of such a class of persons really becomes matter of serious consideration to the State.

Shepherd. Wad ye be for pittin them doun by the strong arm o' the Law?

North. Why, you see, James, before we could reach them, it would be necessary to alter the whole Criminal Jurisprudence of Scotland.

Shepherd. I dinna see that ava. Let it just be enacted,

neist session o' Parliament, that the punishment o' the first offence shall be sax months' imprisonment on crowdy,[1] o' the second Botany, and the third death without benefit o' clergy. But stop a wee—cut aff the hinner end o' that last clause, and let the meenisters o' religion be admitted to the condemned cells.

North. Define "First Offence."

Shepherd. Ay, that gars ane scart their head. I begin to see into the diffeeculties o' Pænal Legislawtion.

North. Then, James, think on the folly of rewarding a miserable Driveller, for his first offence, with board and lodging for six months!

Shepherd. We maun gie up the crowdy. Let the first offence, then, be Botany.

North. We are then brought to the discussion of one of the most puzzling problems in the whole range of——

Shepherd. Just to prevent that—for the solution o' sic a puzzling problem would be a national nuisance—let us mercifully substitute, at ance and to be dune wi't, for the verra first offence o' the kind, however sma', and however inaccurately defined, neither maun we be verra pernickitty about evidence, the punishment o' death.

North. I fear hanging would not answer the desired end.

Shepherd. Answer the end?

North. A sort of spurious sympathy might be created in the souls of the silly ones, with the poor poetasters following one another, with mincing steps, up the scaffold-ladder, and then looking round upon the crowd with their "eyes in a fine frenzy rolling," and perhaps giving Hangy their last speeches and dying words to distribute, in the shape of sonnets, odes, and elegies, all the while looking at once Jemmy-Jessamyish and Jacky Lacka-daisical, with the collars of their shirts, for the nonce, a-la-Byron, and their tuneful throats, white as those of so many Boarding-school Misses, most piteous to behold, too rudely visited by a hempen neckcloth. There would be a powerful and dangerous reaction.

Shepherd. I see farther and farther ben intil the darkness o' Pænal Legislawtion. There is but ae resource left—Tak the punishment into your ain hauns. The nation expects it, sir. Gie them THE KNOUT.

North. I will.

Shepherd. Horridly conceese!

[1] *Crowdy*—porridge without salt.

North. Unroll a few yards of yonder List, James, and read off the first fifty names.

Shepherd. Mercy on us! Lang as the signatures to the Roman Catholic Petition, or the Address to Queen Caroline. How far wad it reach?

North. It is not so long as you imagine, James. It is precisely as long as the front of the Lodge.

Shepherd. Forty yards! A hunder and twenty feet o' the names o' Poets a' flourishin in Embro' at ae era!

North. Read away, James.

Shepherd. A' arranged alphabetically, as I hope to be shaved! Puir fallow AAA! Little did your father think, when he was haudin ye up in lang frocks, a skirlin babby, to be chrissen'd after your uncle and your granpawpa, that in less than twunty years you were to be rebaptised in bluid, under the Knout o' ane without bowels and without ruth! (*Letting the List fall out of his hands*).—I hae nae heart to get beyond thae three maist misfortunate and ill-chosen Initials! I'm gettin a wee sick—whare's the Glenlivet? Hech! But I'm better noo. Puir chiel! I wuss I hadna kent him; but it's no twa months back sin' he was at Mount Benger, and left wi' me a series o' Sonnets on Puddock-stools, on the moddle o' Milton's.

North. No invidious appeal to my mercy, James.

Shepherd. Let it at least temper your justice; yet sure aneuch never was there sic a screed o' vermin.

North. Never since the Egyptian plague of flies and lice.

Shepherd. Dinna be too severe, sir—dinna be too severe. Rather ca' them froggies.

North. Be it so. As when, according to Cowper—

> "A race obscene,
> Spawn'd in the muddy beds of Nile, came forth
> Polluting Egypt: gardens, fields, and plains,
> Were covered with the pest; the streets were fill'd;
> The croaking nuisance lurk'd in every nook;
> Nor palaces, nor even chambers, 'scaped;
> And the land stank—so numerous was the fry."

Shepherd. The land stank! Cowper meant there, a' Egypt. But in Embro', where The Land means, ye ken, a Tenement or Tenements, a batch o' houses, a continuous series o' lodgings, the expression "The land stank," is fearsomely intensified to the nostrils o' the imagination o' ilka individual either in the New or the Auld Town.

North. It must have brought down the price of lodgings.

Shepherd. Mony o' them wunna let at a'. You canna gang doun a close without jostling again' the vermin. Shoals keep perpetually pourin doun the common-stairs. Wantin to hae a gude sicht o' the sea, last time I was here, I gaed up to the Calton Hill. There was half-a-dizzen decided anes crawlin aneath the pillars o' the Parthenion,—and I afterwards stumbled on as mony mair on the tap o' Neelson's Moniment.

North. It is shocking to think that our churches are infested by[1]——

Shepherd. Na, what's waur than that, this verra evenin I met ane loupin doun Ambrose's main staircase. Tappytoorie had luckily met him on his way up; and having the poker in his haun—he had been ripin the ribs o' the Snuggery—Tappy charged him like a lancer, and ye never saw sic spangs as the cretur, when I met him, was makin towards the front door.

North. A very few young men of true poetical genius, and more of true poetical feeling, we have among us, James, nevertheless; and them, some day soon, I propose to praise——

Shepherd. Without pleasin them—for unless you lay it on six inches thick—the butter I mean, no the Knout—they'll misca' you ahint your back for a niggard. Then, hoo they butter ane anither—and their ainsels! Genius—genius—genius! That's aye their watchword and reply—but a's no gowd that glitters—paste's no pearls—a Scotch peeble's no a Golconda gem—neither is a bit glass bead a diamond—nor a

[1] Indulging in a similar strain of satire, Pope exclaims,—

"Shut, shut the door, good John! fatigued I said,
Tie up the knocker—say I'm sick, I'm dead.
The Dog-star rages! nay, 'tis past a doubt,
All Bedlam, or Parnassus, is let out:
Fire in each eye, and papers in each hand,
They rave, recite, and madden round the land.
What walls can guard me, or what shades can hide?
They pierce my thickets, through my grot they glide,
By land, by water, they renew the charge,
They stop the chariot, and they board the barge.
No place is sacred, not the church is free,
Even Sunday shines no Sabbath-day to me:
Then from the Mint walks forth the man of rhyme,
Happy! to catch me, just at dinner-time."

Prologue to Satires, i. 14.

See also the First Satire of Juvenal.

leaf o' tinsy a burnished sheet o' the ore for which kingdoms are bought and sold, and the human conscience sent into thrall to the powers o' darkness.

North. Modest merit must be encouraged and fostered.

Shepherd. Whare wull ye find it?

North. Why, there, for example, are our Three countrymen—and I might notice others—Pringle, and Malcolm, and Hetherington.[1]

Shepherd. Fine fallows, a' the Three—Here's to them!

North. The night improves, and must be almost at its best. That is a first-rate howl! Well done—hail. I pity the poor hot-houses. The stones cannot be less than sugar-almonds.

Shepherd. Shoogger-awmons! They're like guse-eggs. If the lozens[2] werena pawtent plate, lang ere noo they would hae a' flown into flinders. But they're ball-proof. They wudna break though you were to let aff a pistol.

North. What, James, is your favourite weather?

Shepherd. A clear, hard, black frost. Sky without a clud—sun bright, but almost cold—earth firm aneath your feet as a rock—trees silent, but not asleep, wi' their budded branches—ice-edged rivers, amaist mute and motionless, yet wimplin a wee, and murmuring dozingly as in a dream—the air or atmosphere sae rarified by the mysterious alchemy o' that wonderfu' Wuzzard Wunter, that when ye draw in your breath, ye're no sensible o' ha'in ony lungs; wi' sic a celestial coolness does the spirit o' the middle region pervade and permeate the totality o' ane's haill created existence, sowl and body being but ae essence, the pulses o' ane indistinguishable frae the feelins o' the ither, materialism and immaterialism just ane and the same thing, without ony perceptible shade o' difference, and the immortality o' the sowl felt in as sure a faith as the NOW of its being, sae that ilka thocht is as pious as a prayer, and the happy habitude o' the entire man an absolute religion.

North, James, my dear friend, you have fine eyes, and a

[1] Thomas Pringle was one of the editors of the early numbers of *Blackwood's Magazine* (see *ante*, p. 246, note 4). He emigrated to South Africa, and published an account of his residence there. He returned to England, and died in 1834. John Malcolm wrote some poems in the Annuals of that period. William Hetherington is now an eminent D.D. in the Free Church of Scotland. He wrote the *Fulness of Time;* and, among other works, a highly respectable, although somewhat one-sided, *History of the Church of Scotland.*

[2] *Lozens*—panes of glass, lozenge-shaped.

noble forehead. Has Mr Combe ever manipulated your caput?

Shepherd. Ou ay. A' my thretty-three organs or faculties are—enormous.

North. In my development wonder is very large; and therefore you may suppose how I am astonished. But, my dear weather-wiseacre, proceed with your description.

Shepherd. Then, sir, what a glorious appetite in a black frost! Corned beef and greens send up in their steam your soul to heaven. The greediest gluttony is satisfied, and becomes a virtue. Eating, for eating's sake, and in oblivion o' its feenal cause, is then the most sacred o' household duties. The sweat-drops that stand on your brow, while your jaws are clunkin, is beautifu' as the dew on the mountain at sunrise—as poetical as the foam-bells on the bosom o' the glitterin river. The music o' knives and forks is like that o' "flutes and saft recorders," "breathing deliberate valour;" and think, sir, oh think! hoo the imagination is roosed by the power o' contrast between the gor-cock lyin wi' his buttered breast on the braid o' his back upon a bed o' brown toasted bread, and whurrin awa in vain doun the wund afore the death-shot, and then tapsalteerie head-over-heels, on the blue lift, and doun on the greensward or the blooming heather, a battered and bluidy bunch o' plumage, gorgeous and glorious still in the dead-thraws, your only bird o' Paradise!—— Death and Destruction!

[*The small oriel window of the Snuggery is blown in with a tremendous crash.* NORTH *and the* SHEPHERD *prostrated among the ruins.*

North. Are you among the survivors, James?—wounded or dead? (*An awful pause.*) Alas! alas! who will write my Epithalamium! And must I live to see the day on which, O gentle Shepherd, these withered hands of mine must falter thy Epicedia!

Shepherd. O, tell me, sir, if the toddy-jug has been upset in this catastrophe, or the Tower of Babel and a' the speerits!

North (*supporting himself on his elbow, and eying the festal board*). Jug and Tower are both miraculously preserved amidst the ruins!

Shepherd. Then am I a dead man, and lyin in a pool o' bluid. Oh! dear me! Oh! dear me! a bit broken lozen has cut my jugular!

North. Don't yet give yourself up, my dear, dear Shepherd, for a dead man. Ay—here's my crutch—I shall be on my legs presently—surely they cannot both be broken; and if I can but get at my tape-garter, I do not despair of being able to tie up the carotid.

Shepherd. Pu' the bell for a needle and thread.—What's this?—I'm fentin!

[*The* SHEPHERD *faints away; and* NORTH *having recovered his feet, and rung the bell violently, enter* MR AMBROSE, MON. CADET, SIR DAVID GAM, KING PEPIN, *and* TAPPY-TOORIE, *cum multis aliis.*

North. Away for Liston[1]—one and all of you, away like lightning for Liston. You alone, Ambrose, support Mr Hogg in this, I fear, mortal swoon. Don't take him by the feet, Ambrose, but lift up his head, and support it on your knee.

[MR AMBROSE, *greatly flurried, but with much tenderness, obeys the mandate.*

Shepherd (*opening his eyes*). Are you come hither, too, Awnrose? 'Tis a dreadfu' place. What a fire? But let us speak lown, or Clootie 'ill hear us. Is he ben the hoose?—Oh! Mr North, pity me the day! are you here too, and has a' our daffin come to this at last?

North. Where, my dear James, do you think you are? In the Hotel.

Shepherd. Ay, ay, Hothell indeed! I swarfed awa in a bluidy swoon, and hae awaukened in a fearfu' eternity. Noctes Ambrosianæ indeed! And whare, oh! whare is that puir, short-haund, harmless body, Gurney? Hae we pu'd him doun wi' us to the bottomless pit?

North. Mr Ambrose, let me support his head, while you bring the Tower of Babel.

[MR AMBROSE *brings the Tower of Babel, and applies the battlements to the* SHEPHERD'S *lips.*

Shepherd. Whusky here! I daurna taste it, for it can be naething but melted sulphur. Yet, let me just pree't. It has a maist unearthly similitude to Glenlivet. Oh! Mr North—Mr North—tak aff thae horns frae your head, for they're awfu' fearsome. Hae you gotten a tail too? And are you, or are you not, answer me that single question, an Imp o' Darkness?

[1] See *ante*, p. 246, note 2.

North. Bear a hand, Mr Ambrose, and give Mr Hogg London-carries to his chair.

[North *and* Ambrose *mutually cross wrists, and bear the* Shepherd *to his seat.*

Shepherd. Hoo the wund sughs through the lozenless wundow, awaukenin into tenfold fury the Blast-Furnace.

(*Re-enter* Mon. Cadet, King Pepin, Sir David Gam, *and* Tappytoorie.)

Mon. Cadet. Mr Liston has left town to attend the Perth Breakneck, which has had an overturn on Queensferry Hill—and 'tis said many legs and heads are fractured.

Tappytoorie. He'll no be back afore midnicht.

Ambrose (*chastising Tappy*). How dare you speak, sir?

North. Most unlucky that the capsize had not been delayed for ten minutes. How do you feel now, James?

Shepherd. Feel? I never was better in my life. But what's the matter wi' your nose, sir? About half-way doun the middle, it has taken a turn at right angles towards your left lug. Ane o' the splinter-bars o' the window has bashed it frae the line o' propriety, and you're a fricht for life. Only look at him, gentlemen; saw ye ever siccan a pheesiognomy?

North. Tarriers, begone! [*Exeunt omnes.*

Shepherd. We're twa daft fules—that's sure aneuch—and did the public ken o' this, the idiwuts wad cry out, "Buffoonery—buffoonery!"—But we can never sit here without lozens.

(*Re-enter* Mr Ambrose, *and a Carpenter, with a new Window-frame.*)

North. Let me adjust the pulleys. It fits to a hair. Well done, deacon. Expedition's the soul of business—off with your caulker—Thank you—Good-night.

[Mr Ambrose *and Carpenter exeunt with the debris.*

Shepherd. Joking and jinks apart, Mr North, there's bluid on your nose. Let me pit a bit o' black stickin-plaister on't. There—Mrs Gentle wad think you unco killin wi' that beauty-spot on your neb.

North. Hush.—Pray, James, do you believe in the Devil?

Shepherd. Just as firmly as I believe in you, sir. Yet, I confess, I never could see the sin in abusin the neerdoweel; whereas mony folk, no ower and aboon religious, in ither respects, haud up their hauns and the whites o' their een whenever you satireeze Satan—and cry "Whisht, whisht!" My mind never yet has a' my days got rid o' ony early

impression; and against baith reason and revelation, I canna think o' the Deevil even yet, without seein him wi' great big goggle fiery een, a mouth like a foumart-trap, the horns o' a Lancashire kyloe, and a tufted tail atween that o' a bill's, a lion's, and a teeger's. Let me see him when I wull, sleepin or waukin, he's aye the verra leevin image o' a woodcut.

North. Mr Southey, in some o' his inimitable ballads, has turned him into such ridicule that he has laid his tail entirely aside, screwed off his horns, hid his hoofs in Wellingtons, and appeared, of late years, in shape and garb more worthy of the Prince of the Air. I have seen such people turn up the whites of their eyes at the Laureate's profanity—forgetting that wit and humour are never better employed than against superstition.

Shepherd. Ay, Mr Southey's a real wutty man, forbye being a great poet. But do you ken, for a' that, my hair stands on end o' its tinglin roots, and my skin amaist crawls aff my body, whenever, by a blink o' the storm-driven moon, in a mirk nicht, I chance to forgather wi' auld Clootie, Hornie, and Tuft-tail, in the middle o' some wide moor, amang hags, and peat-mosses, and quagmires, nae house within mony miles, and the uncertain weather-gleam, blackened by some auld wood, swingin and sughin to the wind, as if hotchin wi' warlocks.

North. Poo—I should at once take the bull by the horns—or, seizing him by the tail, drive him with my crutch into the nearest loch.

Shepherd. It's easy speakin. But you see, sir, he never appears to a man that's no frichtened aforehaun out o' his seven senses—and imagination is the greatest cooard on earth, breakin out into a cauld sweat, his heart loup-loupin, like a fish in a creel, and the retina o' his ee representin a' things, mair especially them that's ony way infernal, in gruesome features, dreadfully disordered; till reason is shaken by the same panic, judgment lost, and the haill sowl distracted in the insanity o' Fear, till you're nae better than a stark-staring madman.

North. Good, James—good.

Shepherd. In sic a mood could ony Christian cretur, even Mr Southey himsel, tak haud o' the deil either by the horns or the tail?—mair likely that in frenzied desperation you loup wi' a spang on the bristly back o' the Evil Ane, wha gallops

aff wi' you demented into some loch, where you are found floatin in the mornin a swollen corp, wi' the mark o' claws on your hause, your een hangin out o' their sockets; your head scalped wi' something waur than a tammyhawk, and no a single bane in your body that's no grund to mash like a malefactor's on the wheel, for havin curst the Holy Inquisition.

North. Why, my dear Shepherd, genius, I feel, can render terrible even the meanest superstition.

Shepherd. Meanness and majesty signify naething in the supernatural. I've seen an expression in the een o' a pyet, wi' its head turned to the ae side, and though in general a shy bird, no caring for you though you present your rung[1] at it as if you were gaun to shoot it wi' a gun, that has made my verra heart-strings crunkle up wi' the thochts o' some indefinite evil comin I kent na frae what quarter o' the lowerin heavens.—For pyets, at certain times and places, are no canny, and their nebs look as if they were peckin at mort-cloths.

North. Cross him out, James—cross him out.

Shepherd. A raven ruggin at the booels o' a dead horse is naething; but ane sittin a' by himsel on a rock, in some lanely glen, and croak-croakin, naebody can think why, noo lookin savagely up at the sun, and noo tearin, no in hunger, for his crap's fu' o' carrion, but in anger and rage, the moss aneath him wi' beak or tawlons; and though you shout at him wi' a' your micht, never steerin a single fit frae his stance, but absolutely lauchin at you wi' a horrid guller in the sooty throat o' him, in derision o' you, ane o' God's reasonable creturs,—I say, sir, that sic a bird, wi' sic unaccoontable conduct, in sic an inhuman solitude, is a frichtsome demon; and that when you see him hop-hoppin awa wi' great jumps in amang the region o' rocks, you wadna follow him into his auncient lair for ony consideration whatsomever, but turn your face doun the glen, and thank God at the sound o' some distant bagpipe. A' men are augurs. Yet sitting here, what care I for a raven mair than for a how-towdie?

North. The devil in Scotland, during the days o' witchcraft, was a most contemptible character.

Shepherd. Sae muckle the better. It showed that sin maun be a low base state, when a superstitious age could embody

[1] *Rung*—walking-staff.

it in a nae mair imposing impersonation. I should like to ken distinckly the origin o' Scottish witchcraft. Was't altogether indigenous, think ye, sir? or coft[1] or borrowed frae ither kintras?

North. I am writing a series of articles on witchcraft, James, and must not forestall myself at a Noctes.

Shepherd. Keep it a' to yoursel, and nae loss. Had I been born then, and chosen to play the deevil——

North. You could not have done so more effectually than you did some dozen years ago, by writing the Chaldee Manuscript.

Shepherd. Hoots!—I wadna hae condescended to let auld flae-bitten wutches kiss——

North. That practice certainly showed the devil to be no gentleman—But, pray, who ever thought he was one?

Shepherd. Didna Milton?

North. No, James. Milton makes Satan—Lucifer himself—Prince of the morning—squat down a toad by the ear of Eve asleep in Adam's bosom in the nuptial-bower of Paradise.

Shepherd. An eve's-dropper. Nae mair despicable character on earth or in hell.

North. And afterwards, James, in the hall of that dark consistory, in the presence-chamber of Pandemonium, when suddenly to the startled gaze of all his assembled peers, their great Sultaun, with "fulgent head," "star-bright appears," and godlike addresses the demons—What happens? a dismal universal hiss—and all are serpents![2]

Shepherd. Gran' is the passage—and out o' a' bounds magnificent, ayont ony ither imagination o' a' the sons o' men.

North. Yes, my dear James—the devil, depend upon it, is *intus et in cute*—a poor pitiful scoundrel.

Shepherd. Yet I canna quite agree wi' Young in his *Night Thoughts*, who says, "Satan, thou art a *dunce!*" I canna picture him to my mind's ee sittin wi' his finger in his mouth, at the doup o' the furm—Booby.

North. Yet you must allow that his education has been very much neglected—that his knowledge, though miscellaneous, is superficial—that he sifts no subject thoroughly—and never gets to the bottom of anything.

[1] *Coft*—bought.

[2] *Paradise Lost*, book x. line 504.

Shepherd. No even o' his ain pit. But it wadna be fair to blame him for that, for it has nane.

North. Then he is such a poltroon, that a child can frichten him into hysterics.

Shepherd. True—true. It can do that, just by kneelin doun at the bedside, fauldin its hauns together, wee bit pawm to wee bit pawm, turnin up its blue een to heaven, and whusperin the Lord's Prayer. That sets Satan into a fit—like a great big he-goat in the staggers—aff he sets ower the bogs—and wee Jamie, never suspeckin' that it's the smell o' sulphur, blaws out the lang-wick'd cawnle that has been dreepin its creesh on the table, and creeps into a warm sleep within his father's bosom.

North. I have sometimes amused myself with conjecturing, James, what may be his opinion of the Magazine.

Shepherd. Him read the Magazine! It would be wormwood to him, sir. Waur than thae bonny red-cheeked aipples that turned within his mouth into sand and ashes. Yet I wuss he would become a regular subscriber—and tak it in. Wha kens that it michtna reclaim him—and

> " I'm wae to think upon yon den,
> Even for *his* sake!"

North. Having given the devil his due—what think ye, James, of these proposed prosecutions of the Press?

Shepherd. Wha's gaun to tak the law o' Blackwood noo?

North. Not Blackwood, but the newspaper press, with the *Standard*—so, 'tis said—and the *Morning Journal*, at the head.

Shepherd. I never heard tell o't afore. Wha's the public persecutor?

North. The Duke of Wellington.

Shepherd. That's a confoonded lee, if ever there was ane tauld in this warld.

North. James, look at me,—I am serious. The crime laid to their charge is that of having endeavoured to bring the government into contempt.[1]

Shepherd. If a crime be great in proportion as it's diffeecult,

[1] They were prosecuted at the instance of Wellington and Peel, for having charged these statesmen with a dereliction of principle in passing the Catholic Emancipation Act. Mr Robert Alexander, editor of the *Morning Journal*, was convicted and imprisoned.

I am free tae confess, as they say in Parliament, that the bringin o' the government o' this kintra into contempt, maun be a misdemeanour o' nae muckle magnitude.

North. Perhaps it is wrong to despise anything; and certainly, in the highest Christian light, it is so. Wordsworth finely says, "He who feels contempt for any living thing, has faculties which he has never used."

Shepherd. Then Wudsworth has faculties in abundance that he has never used; for he feels contempt for every leevin thing, in the shape either o' man or woman, that can write as gude or better poetry than himsel—which I alloo is no easy; but still it's possible, and has been dune, and will be dune again, by me and ithers. But that's rinnin awa frae the subject.—Sae it's actionable to despise the government! In that case, no a word o' politics this nicht. Do ye admire the government?

North. Sweet are the uses of adversity, "that, like the toad, ugly and venomous, wears yet a precious jewel in its head."

Shepherd. But admittin the aptitude o' the first pairt o' the similitude, has the present government a precious jewel in its head? I dout it—although the Duke o' Wellington may, for onything I ken to the contrar, hae like Hazlitt—and like him deny it too—a carbuncle on his nose.

North. If the government bring actions against the *Standard* and the *Morning Journal*, it must then, to be consistent, instantly afterwards institute an action of a very singular and peculiar kind—an action against itself—

Shepherd. Eh?

North. For having not only endeavoured, but beyond all expectation of the most sanguine, succeeded in overwhelming itself beneath a load of contempt, from which all the spades and shovels of all the ministerial hirelings, whether Englishmen feeding on roast-beef and plum-pudding, or Irishmen on "wetuns" and praes,[1] or Scotchmen on brose, butter, and brimstone, will never, between this date and the Millennium, supposing some thousands of the most slavish of the three nations working extra hours, succeed in disinterring it, nor, dig till they die, ever come within a myriad cubic feet of its putrefying skeleton.

[1] *Praes*—potatoes.

Shepherd. But surely the Duke wull haud the hauns o' the Whig Attorney?

North. The Duke, who has stood in a hundred battles, calm as a tree, in the fire of a park of French artillery, cannot surely, James, I agree with you, turn pale at a shower of paper pellets.

Shepherd. No pale wi' fear, but aiblins wi' anger. *Ira furor brevis.*

North. Better Latin than any of Hazlitt's quotations.

Shepherd. It *is* Latin. But do you really think that he's mad?

North. I admire the apothegm, James.

Shepherd. I'll lay a hoggit o' whusky to a saucer o' salloop, that the Government never brings its actions against the *Stannard* and *Jurnal.*

North. But there's no salloop in Scotland, James—and were I to lose my wager, I must import a saucerful from Cockaigne —which would be attended with considerable expense—as neither smack nor waggon would take it on board, and I should have to send a special messenger, perhaps an express, to Mr Leigh Hunt.

Shepherd. What are the ither papers sayin till't?

North. All on fire, and blazing away with a proper British spirit—*Globe*, *Examiner*, and all—except "yon trembling coward who forsook his master," the shameful yet shameless slave, the apostatising *Courier*, whose unnatural love of tergiversation is so deep, and black-grained, and intense, that once a quarter he is seen turning his back upon himself, in a style justifying a much-ridiculed but most felicitous phrase of the late Lord Castlereagh; so that the few coffee-house readers, who occasionally witness his transformations, have long given up in despair the hopeless task of trying to discover his brazen face from his wooden posteriors, and let the *lusus naturæ*, with all its monstrosities, lie below the table bespitten and bespurned, *in secula seculorum.*

Shepherd. That's a maist sweepin and sonorous specimen o' oral vituperation.

North. The Liberty of the Press can never be perfectly pure from licentiousness. If it were, I should propose calling it the Slavery of the Press. What sense is there in telling any set of men by all manner of means to speak out boldly about

their governors and their grievances, for that such is the birthright of Britons—to open their mouths barn-door wide, and roar aloud to the heavens with lungs of which the machinery is worked by steam, a high-pressure-engine—and yet the moment they begin to bawl beyond the birthright of Britons, what justice is there in not only commanding the aforesaid barn-door-wide mouths to be shut, bolted, locked, and the key-hole hermetically sealed, but in punishing the bawling Britons for having, in the enthusiasm of their vociferation, abused their birthright of crying aloud to the winds of heaven against their real or imaginary tyrants and oppressors, by fine, imprisonment, expatriation, or not impossibly—death?

Shepherd. Sic conduct can proceed only frae a maist consummate ignorance o' the nature o' the human mind, and a wilfu' and wicked non-understanding o' that auncient apothegm, "Gie an inch, and you'll tak an ell." Noo, I say, debar them the inch by an ack o' the Legislature, if you wull; but if you alloo them the inch, wull you flee in the face o' a' experience, fine them for a foot, and hang them for an ell? That's sumphish.

North. James, I shall certainly put you into Parliament next dissolution.

Shepherd. But I'll no gang. For althongh I'm complete maister o' the English language and idiom, I've gotten a slicht Scottish accent that micht seem singular to the Southrons; and confoun' me gin I could bear to be lauchen at by the stammerin coofs that hum and ha yonner like sae mony boobies tryin to repeat by heart their lessons frae the horn-book. My pride couldna submit to their "Hear—hear—hears!" by way o' derision, and I wud be apt to shut my nieve, and gie some o' them a douss on the chafts, or a clink on the side o' the head, contrar to the rules o' Parliament.

North. With scarcely an exception—now that Brougham is mute—save Sadler and Huskisson,[1] who in very different styles speak admirably, the members of the Lower House are a pack partly of pert praters, shallow, superficial, coxcombical, and pedantic—yes, James, absolutely pedantic—and partly of drawling dunces, who dole out a vast fund of facts, one and all of which have figured for weeks, months, years, in all the

[1] Huskisson was run down by a steam-engine at the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway in 1830, and died after lingering a few hours.

newspapers, metropolitan and provincial, and have ceased to be familiar to Wilkie's "Village Politicians."[1]

Shepherd. I ax pardon, sir, for interruptin you; but did you see Mr Wulkie when he was in Scotland this time—and if you did, hoo is he—and what for did he no come out-by to Mount Benger?

North. The Prince of Painters is as the whole world would wish, well and happy, and in social converse delightful as ever—simple, yet original—plain, yet profound—calm, yet enthusiastic—and his whole character *composed* by the thoughtfulness of a genius that, in his art, works its way slowly and surely through many a multitude of conceptions to the final idea which with consummate skill he embodies in immortal forms. And may the colours be immortal too—works one and all, laborious though they be, of inspiration!

Shepherd. But what for didna he come out-by this time to Mount Benger? I weel remember George Tamson bringin him out in the hairst o' 1817, and me readin till them pairt o' The Manuscripp.

North. What! the Chaldee?

Shepherd. What else? Hoo they leuch!

North. Bad as was the haranguing, and good the humming and hawing, at the Edinburgh Forum[2] of old, James, where first you "fulmined over Greece," yet for even-down right hammering stupidity, St Stephen's exceeds the Forum far. Nor was yon queer comical body, James, the wee bit smug-faced, smooth-haired, low-browed, pug-nosed, cock-chinned, bandy-legged, hump-backed Precentor to the Chapel rejoicing in the Auld Light, in Liberton's Wynd, who used occasionally to open the question, the tenth part so tiresome, after the ludicrousness of the exhibition had got stale, as Sir Thomas Leather-breeches,[3] stinking of Zummerset, looking from him with a face as free from one single grain of meaning as a clean-swept barn-floor, labouring to apply to speech a mouth manifestly made by gracious nature for the exclusive purpose of bolting bacon, vainly wagging in a frothy syllabub of words a tongue in its thickness admirably adapted, and then

[1] The "Village Politicians," a celebrated picture by Wilkie.

[2] A debating society of very miscellaneous constitution, where Hogg used to hold forth early in the century.

[3] Sir Thomas Lethbridge.

only felicitously employed, for lapping up lollipops, ever and anon with a pair of awful paws raking up the coarse bristle of his poll, so that, along with the grunt of the greedy pig, you are presented with the quills of the fretful porcupine; and since the then and the there alluded to, gobbling up his own words—for meanings had he never none—like a turkey-cock his own voidings; and giving the lie direct to the whole of his past political life, public and private, if indeed political life it may be called, which was but like the diseased doze of a drunkard dreaming through a stomach dark and deep as the cider-cellar.

Shepherd. To my lugs, sir, the maist shockin epithet in our language is—Apostate. Soon as you hear it, you see a man selling his sowl to the deevil.

North. To Mammon.

Shepherd. Belial or Beelzebub. I look to the mountains, Mr North, and stern they stand in a glorious gloom, for the sun is strugglin wi' a thunder-cloud, and facing him a faint but fast-brichtenin rainbow. The ancient spirit o' Scotland comes on me frae the sky; and the sowl within me re-swears in silence the oath o' the Covenant. There they are—the Covenanters—a' gathered thegither, no in fear and tremblin, but wi' Bibles in their bosoms, and swords by their sides, in a glen deep as the sea, and still as death, but for the sound o' a stream and the cry o' an eagle. "Let us sing, to the praise and glory of God, the hundred psalm," quoth a loud clear voice, though it be the voice o' an auld man; and up to Heaven hauds he his strang withered hauns, and in the gracious wunds o' heaven are flying abroad his grey hairs, or say rather, white as the silver or the snaw.

North. Oh, for Wilkie!

Shepherd. The eagle and the stream are silent, and the heavens and the earth are brocht close thegither by that triumphin psalm. Ay, the clouds cease their sailing and lie still; the mountains bow their heads; and the crags, do they not seem to listen, as in that remote place the hour o' the delighted day is filled with a holy hymn to the Lord God o' Israel?

North. My dear Shepherd!

Shepherd. Oh! if there should be sittin there—even in that congregation on which, like God's own eye, looketh down the meridian sun, now shinin in the blue region—an Apostate!

North. The thought is terrible.

Shepherd. But na, na, na! See that bonny blue-eed, rosy-cheeked, gowden-haired lassie—only a thought paler than usual, sweet lily that she is—half-sittin half-lyin on the greensward, as she leans on the knee o' her stalwart grandfather—for the sermon's begun, and all eyes are fastened on the preacher,—look at her till your heart melts as if she were your ain, and God had given you that beautifu' wee image o' her sainted mother, and tell me if you think that a' the tortures that cruelty could devise to inflict, would ever wring frae thae sweet innocent lips ae word o' abjuration o' the faith in which the flower is growing up amang the dewdraps o' her native hills?

North. Never—never—never!

Shepherd. She proved it, sir, in death. Tied to a stake on the sea-sands she stood; and first she heard, and then she saw, the white roarin o' the tide. But the smile forsook not her face; it brichtened in her een when the water reached her knee; calmer and calmer was her voice of prayer, as it beat again' her bonny breast; nae shriek when a wave closed her lips for ever; and methinks, sir—for ages on ages hae lapsed awa sin' that martyrdom, and therefore Imagination may withouten blame dally wi' grief—methinks, sir, that as her golden head disappeared, 'twas like a star sinkin in the sea!

North. God bless you, my dearest James! shake hands!

Shepherd. When I think on these things—in olden times the produce o' the common day—and look aroun' me noo, I could wush to steek my een in the darkness o' death; for dearly as I love it still, alas! alas! I am ashamed o' my country.

North. What an outcry, in such a predicament, would have been made by Leather-breeches!

Shepherd. Bubble and squeak like a pig plotted. But what waur is he than our ain Forty-Five?[1] O, they mak me scunner!

North. Does not the Duke of Wellington know that mortal hatred of the "Great Measure"[2] is in the hearts of millions of his subjects?

Shepherd. His subjects?

North. Yes, James, his subjects; for I am not now speaking of his slaves. His subjects; and if he has that horror at the

[1] See *ante*, p. 264, note. [2] The Catholic Emancipation Bill.

idea of being thought ambitious of being KING, which he chooses to evince by the prosecution of the Press, and an attack on its long-established liberties, then must he be at this hour the most miserable of men. For at this hour, he is the King. No King of England, but himself, could, I verily believe, even if they would, have carried the Catholic Question.

Shepherd. We had better cry on Gurney no to tak doun this, for I jalouse it's actionable—na, for onything I ken, treasonable; and we may be baith hanged.

North. No, James, we are loyal to the back-bone. Till the day of my death will I raise up my feeble voice in honour of the Hero of Waterloo. He saved Europe—the world. Twin-stars in England's sky, immortally shall burn the deified spirits of Nelson and Wellington.

Shepherd. Your words gar me a' grue.

North. But of noble minds ambition is both the first and the last infirmity; an infirmity it must, even in its most glorious mood, be called in all noble minds, except that of Alfred. In war, Wellington, the Gaul-humbler, is a greater name, immeasurably greater than Alfred, the Dane-destroyer. But in peace — too, too painful would it be to pursue the parallel——

Shepherd. And therefore shove across the jug; dicht your broo, for you're sweatin; look less fierce and gloomy; and, wi' your permission, here's "The Kirk o' Scotland!"

North. Ay, let the Church of England prepare her pillars for an earthquake, for I hear a sound louder than all her organs; but our Kirk, small and simple though it be, is built upon a rock that Vulcan himself may not undermine; let the storm rage as loud as it may, her little bells will cheerfully tinkle in the hurly-burly; no sacrilegious hands shall ever fling her pews and pulpits into a bonfire: on her roofs shall ever fall the dews and the sunshine of Peace; Time may dilapidate, but Piety will rebuild her holy altars; and her corner-stone shall endure till Christianity has prepared Earth for melting away into Heaven.

Shepherd. A kind o' cauldness and then a fit o' heat's chasin ane anither through my body—is the jug wi' me? I ax your pardon.

North. Well then, James, millions abhor the Great Measure. And in their abhorrence, must they be dumb? No. They

will speak; and, it may be, louder and longer too than Buonaparte's batteries. Wellington himself cannot silence their fire. And if their engine — their organ — the Press, speak trumpet-tongued against the Great Measure, and the Great Man who carried it by stealing a march on the Friends of the Constitution, so as to take them fatally on flank, and by bribing its Enemies, so as to bring them down in formidable array in front of the army of the Faithful surprised in their position—does he hope, powerful as he is in Place, in Genius, and in Fame, to carry by siege, by sap, or by storm, that Battery which ere now has played upon Thrones till they sunk in ruins, and their crowned Kings fled eleemosynary pensioners into foreign lands!

Shepherd. I didna ken, sir, you had thought sae highly o' the Gentlemen o' the Periodical Press.

North. Periodical! Time is not an element, James, that can enter into any just judgment on the merits of such a question. The same minds are at work for the Press all over Britain, whatever may be the seasons of their appearance in print. I do think very highly of many of the Gentlemen of the Press. Nor does it matter one iota with me, whether they set the Press a-going once a-year or once a-day.

Shepherd. I see there's nae essential distinction.

North. With all my reverence for Mr Southey, I cannot help thinking, that by speaking so bitterly and contemptuously in some passages of his admirable *Progress and Prospects of Society*, of magazines and newspapers, he has glanced aside from the truth, and been guilty of not a little discourtesy to his literary brethren.

Shepherd. He shouldna hae done that—but ye maunna be angry at Mr Soothey.

North. Nor am I. Why, James, the self-same men who write in the *Quarterly Review*, of which, next and equal to the accomplished and powerful Editor,[1] Mr Southey is the ornament and support, write, and that too not by fits and starts, but regularly, and for both fame and bread, in magazines and newspapers. For many years the Editor of the *Quarterly Review*, along with our friend the Professor,[2] who still lends me his aid—contributed, as Mr Southey and all the world know, largely to the Magazine which I have the honour of

[1] John G. Lockhart. [2] Wilson.

feebly editing; and so did and do some of Mr Southey's most esteemed personal friends, such as Mr Lamb and Mr Coleridge. Indeed I could show Mr Southey a contribution-list of names that would make him stare — from Sir Walter Scott to Sir Peter Nimmo.

Shepherd. Mr Soothey maun hae meant to except *Blackwood.*

North. I fear not, James.

Shepherd. That's stupit.

North. The editor of *Colburn's Magazine*[1] is illustrious over Europe—the best critic, and one of the best poets of his age; and many of his contributors are, elsewhere, successful and influential authors. In brief, I would beg leave to say most kindly to the Laureate, that as much, and perhaps more varied talent, is shown in those two Magazines every month, than in that Review every quarter; and that, without any disparagement to the best of all Quarterly Reviews.

Shepherd. I confess I canna help agreein wi' you, sir—though, at the same time, it's kittlier to write in the Quarterly than in Maga. At ony rate, Lockhart aye sends me back my articles——

North. Which I never do.

Shepherd. Dinna ye?—um.

North. True, we of Maga are not so pompous, authoritative, dogmatical, doctorial (perhaps, however, fully more professorial), as ye of the Quarterly; we have not the same satisfaction in constantly wearing wigs, and occasionally shovel-hats; nor do we, like ye, at all times, every man's son of you, indite our articles with a huge pile of books encumbering our table, in a room surrounded by maps, and empty of all bottles save one of eye-water. Our mice do not come from mountains in labour, but out of small chinks and crannies behind the chimney-cheeks of our parturient fancies. When our mountains are in travail they produce mammoths. Absurd, trifling, and ridiculous, we often — too often, are,—ye never; but dull, heavy—nay, stupid—ye sometimes are, while with us, these are universally admitted to be the most impossible of all impossible events in nature. In mere information — or what is called knowledge—learning, and all that—facts, and so forth—we willingly give ye the *pas:* but neither are we ignorant; on the contrary, we are well acquainted with arts and literature, and in the ways of the world—up both to trap

[1] Thomas Campbell.

and to snuff, which, save your reverences! you are not always to the degree your best friends could wish. You have a notion in your wise heads, that you are always walking in advance of the public; we have a notion in our foolish ones, that we are often running in the rear. Ye would fain lead; we are contented to drive. As to divinity, ye are all doctors, some of you perhaps bishops; we, at the best, but licensed preachers. Ye are all Episcopalians, and proud ye are of showing it; we are all, or nearly all, Presbyterians, and think no shame to own it. Whether ye or we are the more or the less bigoted to our respective creeds, it is not for us to say; but we do not scruple to think, that on this point we have greatly the advantage over our brethren of the south. Anti-catholics we both are—and at the risk, perhaps, of some little tautology, we add—Christians. In politics we are steady as the pole-star; so perhaps are ye: but clouds never obscure our brightness; whereas, for some few years past, such is the dense gloom in which it has been hidden, your pole-star has, to the eyes of midnight mariners, been invisible in the sky. To sum up all in one short and pithy sentence, the *Quarterly Review* is the best periodical in the world except *Blackwood's Magazine*, and *Blackwood's Magazine* the best periodical in the world except the *Quarterly Review*.

Shepherd. Haw—haw—haw!—maist capital!—O, sir, but you're beginnin to wax wutty. You were rather a wee prosy about an hour sin' syne, but the toddy, I'm thinkin, 's beginnin to work, and after a few jugs ye talk like an opium-eater.

North. Opium-Eater![1] "Where has he hid his many-coloured head?"

Shepherd. I kenna. But he's like the lave o' the Lakers—when he wons in Westmoreland, he forgets Maga, and a' the rest o' the civileezed warld.

North. Now, James, all this being the case, why will Mr Southey sneer, or worse than sneer, at Moon-Maga, and her Star-satellites?

Shepherd. We maun alloo a great man his crotchets. There's nae perfection in mortal man; but gin I were to look for it onywhere, 'twould be in the life, character, and warks o' Robert Soothey.

[1] Mr De Quincey, the English Opium-Eater, is one of the interlocutors in the next Noctes.

North. With respect, again, to Newspapers,—generally speaking, they are conducted with extraordinary talent. I'll be shot if Junius, were he alive now, would set the world on the rave, as he did some half-century ago. Many of the London daily scribes write as well as ever he did, and some better; witness Dr Gifford and Dr Maginn, in that incomparable paper the *Standard*, or Laabrum; and hundreds, not greatly inferior to Junius, write in the same sort of cutting trenchant style of that celebrated assassin. *Times*, *Chronicle*, *Globe*, *Examiner*, *Herald*, *Sun*, *Atlas*, *Spectator* (one of the most able, honest, and independent of all the Weeklies), are frequently distinguished by most admirable writing; and the *Morning Journal*, though often rather lengthy, and sometimes unnecessarily warm, constantly exhibits specimens of most powerful composition. The *Morning Post*, too, instead of being what it once was, a mere record of fashionable movements, is a political paper now, full, for the most part, of a truly British spirit, expressed with truly British talent. If Zeta[1] be really hanged, the editor of the *Morning Journal* should let him alone; if he be really unhanged, he ought to give the able editor of the *Morning Journal* a good hiding.

Shepherd. He's aiblins no fit. But what's the meanin o' that?

North. Confound me, James, if I know.

Shepherd. Mr Southey, though, I'm thinkin, does not deny tawlent to the daily or weekly Press; he anathemateeses their pernicious principles.

North. True. But does he not greatly exaggerate the evil? Most pernicious principles some of them do, with a truly wicked pertinacity, disseminate; but those which love and spread truth, though perhaps fewer in number, are greater in power; and even were it not so, truth is stronger than falsehood, and will ultimately prevail against her, and that, too, at no remote time. Besides, I do not know of any newspaper that is devoted to the sole worship of falsehood. We must allow some, nay, even great differences of opinion in men's minds, even on the most solemn and most sacred subjects; we ought not to think everything wicked which our understanding or conscience cannot embrace: as there is sometimes

[1] "Zeta," says the American editor, "was an anonymous letter-writer in the *Morning Post*. It was even said that Lord Ellenborough was the author."

found by ourselves, to our own dismay, much bad in *our* good, so, if we look with clear, bright, unjaundiced eyes, we may often see much good in *their* bad; nay, not unfrequently we shall then see, that what we were too willing to think utterly bad, because it was in the broad sheet of an enemy, is entirely good, and feel, not without compunction and self-reproach,

" Fas est et ab hoste doceri."

Shepherd. Are you no in danger o' becomin ower candid the noo, sir; in danger o' rather trimmin?

North. No, James; I am merely trimming the vessel of my own moral reason—removing to the centre the shifted ballast, that, on my voyage to the distant shores of truth, she may not, by making lee-way, drift out of her course, and fall in among the breakers; and then, after putting and seeing all right, I return like a good pilot to the wheel, and, with all sail set, work up, with my merry crew, in the wind's eye, to the safest harbour in all the Land of Promise.

Shepherd. That's a weel-supported simile. You aye speak wi' uncommon smeddum on nowtical affairs.

North. Question—Who are the dangerous writers of the day? Answer—Demagogues and Infidels; there being included in the latter, and indeed also in the former—so, in truth, there is no such distinction—Deists and Atheists. The lowest and worst Demagogues are mostly all dunces; and therefore I must opine, not alarmingly dangerous to the stability of the state, or the well-being of the people. Still they are pests; they pollute alehouses, and make more disgustful gin-shops; the contagion of their bad thoughts sometimes sickens the honest poor man with his humble ingle—irritates his weary heart, confuses his aching head, and makes him an unhappy subject, fit, and ripe, and ready for sedition. Luckily the members of this gang occasionally commit overt acts of which the law can take hold; and, instead of writing them down, which, from the utter debasement of their understandings, as well as that of all their unwashed proselytes, is below the province of the press, and indeed impossible, you tie them down in a cell, and order them to be well privately whipt, or you make them mount the tread-mill, and insist on their continuing to reason, step by step, in a circle.

Shepherd. Besides, many o' them, sir, get hanged for crimes

not at all of a literary character, if, indeed, you except forgery —profligacy kills many more by horrid diseases—and multitudes run away to America, or are sent to Sydney Cove, or the "still vexed Bermoothes." Sae I howp the breed 's on the decline by consumption, and will afore lang rin clean out, dregs an' a'.

North. I agree with Mr Southey, however, in believing that in London, and all large towns, the number of such ruffians is very great. Let the police do its duty.

Shepherd. But, sir, ye maun ascend a few grauds up the scale o' Iniquity.

North. I do—and find some men of good education and small talent, and more men of bad or no education and considerable talent—Demagogues—that is to say, wretches who, from love of mischief, would instigate the ignorant to their own ruin, in the ruin of the state. They write and they speak with fluency and glibness, and the filthy and fetid stream flows widely over poor men's dwellings, especially those who are given to reading, and deposits in workshop, kitchen, parlour, and bedroom, a slime whose exhalation is poison and death. They have publications of their own, and they gloat over and steal and spread everything that is bad and suited to their ends in the publications of some other people, who, while they would scorn their alliance, do nevertheless often purposely contribute aid to their evil designs and machinations. To such charge too large a portion of what is called the Liberal Press must plead guilty, or perhaps they would glory in the charge. This pollution of the Press can only be cleansed by the pure waters of Truth, showered over it by such men as Mr Southey himself; or swept away, if you prefer the image, by besoms in the hands of the righteous, who, for sake of those who suffer, shun not the nauseous office even of fuilzie-men to keep clean and sweet the highways and by-ways, the streets and alleys, of social life.

Shepherd. Such a righteous besom-brandisher is Christopher North, the terror of traitors and the——

North. And thus, James, are we "led another graud up the scale of Iniquity," and reach the Liberal Press. It works much evil, and, I fear not to say, much good.

Shepherd. Say rather some good, sir. Lay the emphasis on *some.*

North. "*Much* good." For it is not to be denied that men may be bigotedly and blindly attached to the right cause. Old institutions seem sacred to their imaginations, beyond the sanctity inherent in their frame. Time-hallowed, they are improvement-proof. But the new may be, and often is, holier than the old—the work of a single day better than that of a thousand years. The soul of

"The fond adorer of departed fame"

sometimes falls asleep on the tomb of the good and great of other times, to the oblivion of far higher living worth; or dozes over the inscription graven there by the gratitude of a former age, instead of more wisely recording the triumphs of contemporary genius or virtue. Reason must be awakened from her slumbers or her dreams in the arms of imagination that loves to haunt old places, and to walk in reveries among the shades of antiquity. The Liberal Press—I take the word as I find it in general use—often breaks these delusions; for they often are delusions, and it oftener shows us to distinguish shadow from substance—fiction from truth—superstition from devotion. It thus does good at times when perhaps it is intending evil; but at times it intends good—does good—and therefore is strictly entitled to unqualified and fervent praise. Such praise I give it now, James—and if Gurney be not asleep, it will ring in the ears of the public, who will ratify the award.

Shepherd. But are you sure that the evil doesna greatly preponderate in the scale?

North. I am sure it does preponderate—but let us, the Illiberals, fling in good into the good, and we restore the balance.

Shepherd. That's incorreck. The evil, light in comparison, kicks the beam—and the good in the other bucket o' the balance remains, for the use o' man, steady on a rock.

North. And here it is that Southey's self authorises me to contradict Southey. While he, and others like to him—a few, perhaps his equals, at least in power, such as Sir Walter, S. T. Coleridge, and William Wordsworth—and not a few, his inferiors indeed in power, but nevertheless his equals in zeal and sincerity—and the many who, without any very surpassing talents, do yet acquire force from faith, and have

reliance on religion,—I say, James, while that Sacred Band moves on in firm united phalanx, in discipline meet to their valour—nor in bright array wanting their music-bands, vocal and instrumental, to hymn them on in the march to victory—who will fear the issue of the battle, or doubt that beneath the Champions of the Cross the Host of the Misbelievers will sustain a signal and fatal overthrow?

Shepherd. You've been speakin, sir, I perceive, by implication, o' infidels, that's deists and atheists, a' the time you were discussin demagogues; but hae ye onything mair particularly to say o' infidels by themsels, as being sometimes a separate gang? Let's hear 't.

North. I believe, James, that there are many, too many, conscientious deists—deists on conviction—on conviction consequent on candid and extensive, but not philosophical and profound inquiry into the evidences, internal and external, of Christianity.

Shepherd. Ah! sir. That's scarcely possible.

North. It is true. But such men do not often—they very rarely seek to disturb the faith of others—and few of them carry their creed on with them to old age, for the Lamp of Revelation burns more brightly before eyes that feel the dimness of years shrouding all mortal things. In meridian manhood, it seems to them that the Sun of Natural Theology irradiates all being, and in that blaze the Star of Revelation seems to fade away and be hidden. But as they approach the close of life, they come to know that the Sun of Natural Theology—and it is a Sun—had shone upon them with a borrowed light, and that the Book of Nature had never been so read by them but for the Book of God. They lived Deists, and they die Christians.

Shepherd. In good truth, sir, I hae kent some affecting cases o' that kind.

North. Now observe the inconsistent conduct of such men; an inconsistency that, I believe, must attach to the character of every virtuous deist in a country where Christianity prevails in its Protestant purity, and is the faith of an enlightened national intellect. Rarely indeed, if ever, do they teach their children their own creed. Their disbelief, therefore, cannot be an utter disbelief. For if it were, a good and conscientious man—and I am supposing the deist to be

such—could not make a sacrifice of the truth for the sake of them he dearly loved; such sacrifice, indeed, would be the height of folly and wickedness. For if he knows Christianity to be an imposture, beautiful though the imposture be—and no human heart ever yet denied its beauty — conscience, God's vicegerent here below, would command him to begin with exposing the imposture to the wife of his bosom, and the children of their common blood. But all unknown perhaps to himself, or but faintly known, the day-spring from on high has with gracious glimpses of light visited his conscience, and that conscience, heaven-touched, trembles to disown the source from which comes that gentle visiting, and, with its still small voice, more divine than he is aware of, whispers him not to initiate in another faith the hearts of the guileless and the innocent, by nature open to receive the words of eternal life. And thus,

> "While Virtue's self and Genius did adorn
> With a sad charm the blinded deist's scorn,
> Religion's self, by moral goodness won,
> Hath smiled forgiving on her sceptic son!"

Shepherd. They are muckle to be pitied, my dear sir; and it's neither for you nor me, nor onybody else, to be hard upon them; and I'll answer for Mr Soothey, that were ony such to visit him in his ain house at Keswick, he wad be as kind to him as he was in the autumn o' aughteen hunder and fourteen to mysel, show him his beautifu' and maist astonishing leebrary, toast bread for him at breakfast wi' his ain hauns, wi' that lang-shanked fork, and tak an oar wi' him in a boat round the Isles, and into the bays o' Derwentwater loch, amusin him wi' his wut, and instructing him wi' his wisdom.

North. I know he would, James. From such deists, then, though their existence is to be deplored, little or no danger need be feared to revealed religion. But there are many more deists of a different stamp,—the shallow, superficial, insensible, and conceited,—the profligate, the brutal, and the wicked. I hardly know which are in the most hopeless condition. Argument is thrown away on both—for the eyes of the one are too weak to bear the light; and those of the other love only darkness. "They hate the light, because their deeds are dark." The former fade like insects; the latter

perish like beasts. But the insects flutter away their lives among weeds and flowers, and are of a sort that sting nobody, though they may tease in the twilight; while the beasts bellow, and gore, and toss, and therefore must be hoodwinked with boards—the tips of their horns must be sawed off, a chain passed through their noses—they must be driven from the green pastures by the living waters, on to the bare brown common; and, unfit for the shambles, must be knocked on the head, and sold to the hounds—"down to the ground at once, as butcher felleth ox."

Shepherd. There are ower mony o' the insecks in Scotland; but, thank God! but few o' the beasts.

North. Because in Scotland, James, the Church, as Wordsworth well says, holds over us "the strong hand of its purity;" and thus infidelity has been chiefly confined to philosophers who would not suffer the Church to catch hold; while, as the beasts I speak of are most likely to arise among the lower orders, the church being omnipotent there, the bulls of Bashan are but a scant breed. In England, from many causes, some of them inevitable in a land so rich, and populous, and many-citied, and some of them existing in neglect of duties secular and religious, the beasts are seen of a larger size, and in larger droves; but providentially, by a law of Nature, the bulls calved have always been in the proportion of a hundred to one to the cows; and as that proportion is always increasing, we may even hope that in half a century the last quey will expire, and then the male monsters will soon become utterly extinct.

Shepherd. Od, man, I never heard you sae feegurative as you are the nicht; yet I maun alloo that maist part o' them 's capital, and but few very muckle amiss.

North. Now, James, with such infidels as these, how are we to deal? First of all, they are doomed, living and dying, to universal loathing, ignominy, scorn, and execration. All that is good. It curses them into hatred of their species—and that curse is intensified by the conviction that their hatred is of little or no avail to hurt the hair of any one Christian's head. Further, their books—for they sometimes write books—are smashed, pounded into pulp, and flung into their faces till they are blind. Groping in their darkness, they pick the pulp up—spread it out again, and dry it in the sun, whose

Maker they blaspheme; and over and over again, after each repetition of the blow—the blash on their eyes—they recommence their manufacture of blotted paper, and scrawl it over with the same impious and senseless scribble, all the while assured of the same result, yet instigated by the master they serve, the Devil. The more they are baffled, the more wickedly they persevere, till the snuff of their wretched life goes out, like Tom Paine's, in a stink, and some Cobbett completes their infamy, by his consecration of their bones.[1]

Shepherd. Yet I fear, sir, Tom Paine worked great evil, even in Scotland.

North. No, James; very little indeed. The times were then troubled, and ripe for mischief. Paine's blasphemy caused the boil to burst. A wise and humane physician, the illustrious and immortal Richard Watson,[2] Lord Bishop of Llandaff, applied a sacred salve to the sore—the wound healed kindly, soon cicatrized, and the patient made whole again bounded in joy and liberty like a deer upon the hills.

Shepherd. Feegur after feegur—in troops, bands, and shoals! What a teeming and prolific imagination! And in auldest age may it never be effete!

North. Your affection for your father, my dear son James, sees in my eye, and hears in my voice, meanings which exist not in them—but the light and the breath touch your spirit, and from its soil arise flowers and shrubs indigenous to the blessed soil of our ain dear Scotland.

Shepherd. Is the theme exhausted—the well run dry—the last leaf shaken frae the tree—wull the string no haud another pearl, or is the diver tired—has your croon gotten on the centre-tap the feenal and consummatin diamond, or do the dark unfathomed caves o' ocean bear nae mair—can the rim roun' it support nae greater wecht o' gowd, or is the mine wrought out—wull the plumes o' thocht that form the soarin crest aboon your coronet no admit anither feather frae the train o' the Bird o' Paradise, or is the bird itsel flown awa into the heart o' the Garden o' Eden? Answer me that mony-feegur'd

[1] "When Cobbett returned to England from the United States in 1819, he brought with him what he said were the bones of Tom Paine. There are strong grounds for believing that they were the remains of some other person."—*American Editor.*

[2] Bishop Watson's *Apology for the Bible* was written in answer to Paine's *Age of Reason.*

interrogatory in the conceeseness o' ae single word, or in the diffusion o' a thousan'—let your voice be as the monotones of the simplest Scottish melody, or as the multitudinousness of the maist complex German harmony, the ane like takin a few short easy steps up a green gowany brae, and the ither like rinnin up and doun endless flights o' stairs leading through a' the mazes o' some immense cathedral, frae the gloom o' cells and oratories on the grun'-floor, or even aneath the rock foundation, to the roof open within its battlements to the night-circle o' the blue boundless heavens, with their moon and stars. There's a touch for you, ye auld conceited carle, o' the picturesque, the beautifu', and shooblime; nor ever dare to think, much less say again, that I, James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, am not a poet equal to a' the three pitten thegither, Ramsay, Kinnigham, and Burns, though they, I acknowledge, till the star of Mount Benger arose, were the *Tria Lumina Scotorum* of our northern sky. But I, sir, I am the great flashing, rustling Aurora Borealis, that gars a' the Three "pale their ineffectual fires" in my electrical blaze, till the een o' our millions are dazzled wi' the coruscations; and earth wonders, and o' its wonderin finds no end, at the troublous glory o' the incomprehensible heaven. There's a touch o' the magnificent for you, ye auld wicked scoonrel! Equal that, and I'll pay the bill out o' my ain pouch, and fling a dollar for himsel to Tappytoorie, without askin for the change. Eh?

North. The evil done by the infidel writings you alluded to, James, was not of long duration, and out of it sprang great good. Many, it is true, suffered the filth of Paine to defile their Bibles. But ere a few moons went up and down the sky, their hearts smote them on account of the insult done to the holy leaves; tears of remorse, contrition, and repentance washed out the stain; every renewed page seemed then to shine with a purer and diviner lustre—they clasped and unclasped with a more reverent hand

"The big Ha'-Bible, ance their Fathers' pride."

Its black-cloth cover was thenceforth more sacred to the eyes of all the family; with more pious care was it replaced by husband and wife, after morning and evening worship, in the chest beside the bridal linen destined to be their shroud. Search, now, all the cottages Scotland thorough, and not one

single copy of the *Age of Reason* will you find; but you will find a Bible in the shieling of the loneliest herdsman.

Shepherd. You speak God's truth, for I ken Scotland weel; and sae do you, for I hae heard you was a wonderfu' walker in your youth; and for the last twenty years, to my certain knowledge, you hae ridden on a race o' sure-footed pownies, far better than ony Spanish or Portuguese mules, a' through amang the mountains, by kittle bridle-paths; and I'm only astonished that you never brak your neck.

North. The main causes of infidelity lie in ignorance and misery, especially in that worst of all misery—guilt. But poverty, brought on by either the profligacy of the labouring classes, or by the ignorance or folly of their rulers, embitters the heart into sullen or fierce disbelief. A wise Political Economy, therefore, is one of the strongest and happiest safeguards of religion.

Shepherd. I canna understaun' it ava. Ricardo's as obscure as Ezekiel.

North. Though dealing directly but with temporal things, it bears, James, on those that are eternal. Statist, statesman, philosopher, and priest, if they know their duty, and discharge it, all work together for one great end.

Shepherd. That's geyan like common sense.

North. When the social state of a people is disturbed by the disarrangement of the natural order, and changes of the natural course of agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, will not morality and religion, my dear James, sink with the sinking prosperity of the country?

Shepherd. They wull that.

North. The domestic virtues cannot live through the winter, round a starved board and a cold hearth. Sound sleep shuns not a hard bed—but no eye can long remain closed on a truckle which next day may see in a pauper's roup at the city-cross.

Shepherd. An' what's the drift o' a' thae verra true and excellent observations?

North. That much of the worst spirit which we deplore in the people, though it may be cruelly exasperated and exacerbated by demagogues and infidels, owes to them neither its origin nor chief growth and nurture, but springs out of the very frame and constitution of society in all great kingdoms.

Shepherd. And is that a consoling doctrine, think ye, sir, or one that gars us despair for our species?

North. What! shall I despair of my species, because I see long periods in the history of my own and other countries, when the moral condition of the people has been withered or blasted by the curse of an incapable, unfeeling, or unprincipled government?

Shepherd. But that's no the character o' the present Government o' our kintra, Mr North?

North. It must strengthen their hands and hearts, James, to know that you are not in opposition. But to return for one moment more to the subject of the infidelity of the lower orders, how beautifully, my dear James, do all the best domestic affections, when suffered to enjoy themselves even in tolerable repose and peace, blend into, and, as it were, become one and the same with religion! Let human nature have but fair play in life—let but its physical necessities be duly supplied—and all its moral sympathies and religious aspirations kindle and aspire. What other religion but Christianity was ever the religion of the poor? But the poor sometimes cease to be Christians, and curse their existence. And Mr Huskisson would be shocked to see and hear how that happens, were he to make an occasional pilgrimage and sojourn in Spital-fields, instead of abusing its wretched dwellers.

Shepherd. It's very unfair, I see, sir, to lay the blame o' the irreligion o' the puir when they are irreligious, as there's but ower mony o' them, according to Mr Soothey and you, in England at this present era, on the shouthers o' the priesthood. What gude wull preachin and prayin do them, when folk are starvin o' cauld, and hae naething either to eat or drink?

North. I have known a poor old sailor, James, who had eat nothing for two days, dismissed from her door by a pious lady, not with a loaf in his pouch—for she referred him to the parish—but—a Bible.

Shepherd. That was verra wicked. Let the body be attended to first, and the sowl afterwards, or you're fleein in the face o' the Ten Commandments.[1] That, I dinna dout, was the pious leddy's ain case; for wasna she a widow wi' a gude jointure, fat, frouzy, and forty, wi' great big peony-rose knots o'

[1] The "ragged schools" have since taken the hint, and, by providing for the wants of the body before attending to those of the mind, have profited by a suggestion which shows the Shepherd to have been in advance of his age.

ribbons a' roun' her mutch, and about to try it on again, in the way o' marriage, wi' a strappin Methody preacher?

North. Before the consummation of that event she died of a surfeit from an inordinate guzzle on a prize-haggis. Much as she talked about the Bible, she showed in practice that she preferred the precepts of Meg Dods. Cookery was, in fact, her Christianity, and hers a kitchen-creed; yet I heard her funeral sermon preached by a great greasy villain, with long black, lank, oily hair, and the most sensual face ever seen on earth since Silenus, who nauseously whined away about her single-mindedness (two husbands, remember, and within a week of a third), her——

Shepherd. Od rot baith her and him, are ye gaun to gar me spew?

North. But take it at the worst, James, and let us believe, with Mr Southey, that the press is now a mighty engine of evil in the hand of the lovers of evil. What then? It is the Press against the Press. Wherein lies our trust? In the mighty array that might be—that is, on the side of heaven. Where are the twenty thousand ministers of religion, more or less? And in their cures and benefices, rich or poor, what are they about? Are they all broad awake, up, stirring, and at work? If so, they are more than a match for the miscellaneous muster of infidels, the lumbering *levy-en-masse* of the godless, who, when brought into action, present the singular appearance of a whole large army consisting entirely of an awkward squad.

Shepherd. And if any considerable number o' the clergy snore awa the week-days weel on to eleven o'clock, and set the congregation a-snore baith forenoon and afternoon ilka Sabbath, showin that they think bapteezin, and buryin, and marryin, and prayin, and preachin, a sair drawback an' doun-draucht on the comforts o' a rectory,—then, I say, let them be ca'd ower the coals by the bishop, and if incorrigible frae natural stupidity or acquired inveteracy o' habit, let them be deposed and pensioned aff the stipen' o' their successors wi' some fifty a-year, aneuch to leeve on in sma' seaport touns, where fish and coals are cheap; and then they may stroll about the sauns, wi' their hauns ahint their backs, gatherin buckies and urchins, and ither shells, looking at the ships comin in and gaun out, and no to be distinguished frae half-

pay lieutenants, except by their no swearin sae muckle, or at a' events no the same queer kind o' comical oaths, but equally wi' them daunderin about, ill aff for something to do, and equally wi' them red about the nose, thin in the cauves, and thick about the ankles.

North. The Church of England is the richest in the world, though I am far from thinking that its riches are rightly distributed. It ought, then, to work well, since it is paid well; and I think, James, that on the whole it is, even as it now stands, a most excellent church. It ought, however, to have kept down Dissenters, which it has not done; and still more, it ought to keep down Infidels. Did some twenty thousand infidels, educated in richly-endowed universities of their own, compose an anti-christian establishment, O Satan! how they would stir hell and earth!

Shepherd. Universities, colleges, schools, academies, cathedrals, minsters, abbeys, churches, chapels, kirks, relief meeting-houses, tabernacles, and what not, without number and without end, and yet the infidels triumph! Is't indeed sae? Then pu' them doun, or convert them, accordin to their conveniences, into theatres, and ridin-schools, and amphitheatres for Ducrow, and racket-courts, and places for dryin claes in rainy weather.

North. If infidelity overruns the land, then this healthy, wealthy, and wise Church of England has not done its duty, and must be made to do it. If infidelity exists only in narrow lines and small patches, then we may make ourselves easy about the infidel press, and, knowing that the Church has done the one thing needful, look with complacency on occasional parson somewhat too jolly, and unfrequent bishop with face made up entirely of proud flesh.

Shepherd. Sughs o' wund, some loud and some laigh, but prophetic o' a storm, hae been aften heard o' late roun' about the square towers—for ye seldom see a spire yonner—o' the English churches. What side, when comes the collieshangie,[1] wull ye, sir, espouse?

North. That of the Church of England, of which Misopseudos[2] himself, with all his integrity and talent, is not a sincerer friend, though he may be a more powerful champion.

[1] *Collieshangie*—disturbance.

[2] I do not know who "Misopseudos" was, or what he wrote.

Shepherd. Eh? What?

North. Whisht! Had you your choice, James, pray what sort of a bird would you be?

Shepherd. I wad transmigrate intil a gey hantle. And, first and foremost, for royal ambition is the poet's sin, I would be an Eagle. Higher than ever in his balloon did Lunardi soar, would I shoot up into heaven. Poised in that empyreal air, where nae storm-current flows, far up aboon the region of clouds, with wide-spread and unquivering wings would I hang in the virgin sunshine. Nae human ee should see me in my cerulean tabernacle—but mine should see the human specks by the sides of rocks and rivers, creeping and crawling, like worms as they are, over their miserable earthly flats, or toiling, like reptiles as they are, up their majestic molehills. Down with a sughing swoop in one moment would I descend a league of atmosphere, still miles and miles above all the dwarf mountain-taps and pigmy forests. Ae headlong lapse mair, and my ears would drink the faint thunder of some puny cataract; another mile in a moment nearer the poor humble earth, and, lo! the woods are what men call majestic, the vales wide, and the mountains magnificent. That pitiful bit of smoke is a city—a metropolitan city. I cross it wi' ae wave of my wing. An army is on the plain, and they are indeed a ludicrous lot of Liliputians.

> "They march with weapons in their hands,
> Their banners bright displaying;
> And all the while their music-bands
> Triumphant tunes are playing!"

The rags are indeed most sublime, waving to the squeak of penny trumpets. Ay, the cloud below my claws begins to rain, and the martial array is getting a thorough soaking—those noble animals, horses, like so many regiments of half-drowned rats. Too contemptible to look at—so away up again to the sky-heart, and for an hour's float far far above the sea. Tiny though they be, I love to look on those thousand isles, mottling the main with beauty; nor do I despise the wave-wanderers, whom Britannia calls her men-of-war. Guided by needle still trummlingly obedient to the pole, on go the giant cockle-shells, which Heaven save from wreck, nor in storm may one single pop-gun be flung overboard! But God-given in-

stinct is my compass—and when the blackness of night is on my eyes, straight as an arrow or a sunbeam I shoot alang the firmament, nor, obedient to that unerring impeller, deviate a mile-breadth from the line that leads direct from the Grampians to the Andes.——The roar of ocean—what—what's that I hear? You auld mannerless rascal, is that you I hear snorin? Ma faith, gin I was an eagle, I wad scart your haffits wi' my tawlons, and try which o' our nebs were the sharpest. Weel, that's maist extraordinar—he absolutely snores on a different key wi' each o' his twa individual nostrils—snorin a first and second like a catch or glee. I wunner if he can snore by the notes—or trusts entirely to his dreaming ear. It's really no that unharmonious—and I think I hear him accompanying Mrs Gentle on the spinnet. Let's coom his face wi' burned cork.

[*The* SHEPHERD *applies a cork to the fire, and makes* NORTH *a Blackamoor.*

North. Kiss me, my love. Another. Sweet—sweet—oh! 'tis sweet!

Shepherd. Haw—haw—haw! Mrs Gentle, gin ye kiss him the noo, the pat 'ill no need to ca' the kettle——

North. Be not so coy—so cold—my love. "Can danger lurk within a kiss?"

Shepherd. Othello—Othello—Othello!

North (*awaking with a tremendous yawn*). 'Tis gone—'twas but a dream!

Shepherd. Ay, ay, what's that you were dreamin about, sir? Your face is a' ower blushes—just like a white rose tinged with the setting sun.

North. I sometimes speak in my sleep. Did I do so now?

Shepherd. If you did, sir, I did not hear you—for I hae been takin a nap mysel, and just awaukened this moment wi' a fa' frae the cock on a kirk-steeple. I hae often odd dreams; and I thocht I had got astride o' the cock, and was haudin on by the tail, when the feathers gave way, and had it not been a dream, I should infallibly have been dashed to pieces. Do you ever dream o' kissing, sir?

North. Fie, James!

Shepherd. O, but you look quite captivatin, quite seducin, when you blush that gate, sir! I never could admire a dark-complexioned man.

North. I do—and often wish mine had been dark——

Shepherd. Ye made a narrow escape the noo, sir; for out o' revenge for your havin ance coomed my face when I fell asleep on my chair, I was within an ace of coomin yours; but when I had the cork ready, my respect, my veneration for you, held my haun, and I flung it into the ass-hole ayont the fender.

North. My dear James, your filial affection for the old man is touching. Yet, had you done so, I had forgiven you——

Shepherd. But I never could hae forgien mysel, it would hae been sae irreverent.—Mr North, I often wush that we had some leddies at the Noctes. When you're married to Mrs Gentle, you maun bring her sometimes to Picâtdy, to matroneeze the ither females, that there may be nae *scandalum magnatum.* And then what pairties! Neist time she comes to Embro', we'll hae The Hemans, and she'll aiblins sing to us some o' her ain beautifu' sangs, set to tunes by that delightfu' musical genius her sister——

North. And she shall sit at my right hand——

Shepherd. And me on hers——

North. And with her wit she shall brighten the dimness her pathos brings into our eyes, till tears and smiles struggle together beneath the witchery of the fair necromanceress. And L. E. L., I hope, will not refuse to sit on the old man's left——

Shepherd. O man! but I wush I could sit next to *her* too; but it's impossible to be, like a bird, in twa places at ance, sae I maun submit——

North. Miss Landon, I understand, is a brilliant creature, full of animation and enthusiasm, and, like Mrs Hemans too, none of your lachrymose muses, "melancholy and *gentlemanlike,*" but, like the daughters of Adam and Eve, earnestly and keenly alive to all the cheerful and pleasant humanities and charities of this everyday sublunary world of ours, where, besides poetry, the inhabitants live on a vast variety of other esculents, and like ever and anon to take a glass of Berwick's beer or Perkins's porter between even draughts of Hippocrene or Helicon.

Shepherd. That's the character o' a' real geniuses, baith males and females. They're ae thing wi' a pen in their haun, at a green desk, wi' only an ink-bottle on't and a sheet o' paper—and anither thing entirely at a white table a' covered

wi' plates and trenchers, soup in the middle, sawmon at the head, and a sirloin o' beef or mutton at the fit, wi' turkeys, and how-towdies, and tongues, and hams, and a' mainner of vegetables, roun' the sides—to say naething o' tarts and flummeries, and the Dulap,[1] Stilton, or feenal[2] cheese—Parmesan.

North. You surely don't mean to say, James, that poetesses are fond of good-eating?

Shepherd. Na. But I mean to say that they are not addicted, like green girls, to eat lime out of walls, or chowin chalk, or even sookin barley-sugar and sweeties in the forenoon, to the spoilin o' their natural and rational denner; but, on the contrair, that they are mistress o' a moderate slice o' roast and biled butcher's meat; after that, the wing or the merry-thocht o' a fool; and after that again some puddin, perhaps, or some berry-pie, some jeely, or some blawmange; taukin and smilin and lauchin at intervals a' the while to their neist-chair neighbour, waxing wutty on his hauns wi' a little encouragement, and joinin sweetly or gaily wi' the general discourse, when, after the cloth has been drawn, the dinin-room begins to murmur like a hive o' honey-bees after a' the drones are dead; and though a' present hae stings, nane ever think o' usin them, but in genial employment are busy in the sunshine o' sociality wi' probosces and wings.

North. What do you mean by a young lady being busy with her proboscis, James?

Shepherd. O ye coof! it's allegorical; sae are her wings. Proboscis is the Latin for the mouth o' a bee, and its instrument for making honey, that is, for extracting or inhaling it out o' the inner speerit o' flowers. Weel, then, why not allegorically speak o' a young lady's proboscis—for drops not, distils not honey frae her sweet mouth? And where, think ye, ye auld crabbit critical carle, does her proboscis find the elementary particles thereof, but hidden amang the saftest leaves that lie faulded up in the heart o' the heaven-sawn flowers o' happiness that beautify and bless the bosom o' this itherwise maist dreary and meeserable earth?

North. Admirable! Proboscis let it be——

Shepherd. Yes, just sae. And neist time you're dreamin o' Mrs Gentle, murmur out wi' a coomed face, "O, 'tis sweet,

[1] *Dulap*—Dunlop, a well-known cheese.
[2] *Feenal*—final.

sweet! One other taste of your proboscis! O, 'tis sweet, sweet!"

North (*starting up furiously*). With a coomed face? Have you dared, you swineherd, to cork my face? If you have, you shall repent it till the latest day of your life.

Shepherd. You surely will forgive me when you hear I am on my deathbed——

North (*at the mirror*). Blackguard!

Shepherd. 'Tweel you're a' that. I ca' that epithet *multum in parvo.* You're a maist complete blackguard—that's beyond a' manner o' dout. What'n whites o' een! and what'n whites o' teeth! But your hair's no half grizzly aneuch for a blackamoor—at least an African ane—and gies you a sort o' uncanny mongrel appearance that wad frichten the King o' Congo.

North. Talking of Mrs Hemans and Miss Landon with a face as black as the crown of my hat!

Shepherd. And a great deal blacker. The croon o' your hat's broon, and I wunner you're no ashamed, sir, to wear't on the streets! but you're face, sir, is as black as the back o' that chimley, and baith wad be muckle the better o' the sweeps.

North. James, I have ever found it impossible to be irate with you more than half a minute at a time during these last twenty years. I forgive you—and do you know that I do not look so much amiss in cork. 'Pon honour——

Shepherd. It's a great improvement on you, sir—and I would seriously advise you to coom your face every day when you dress for denner.—But wunna[1] you ask Miss Jewsbury[2] to the first male and female Noctes? She's really a maist superior lassie.

North. Both in prose and verse. Her *Phantasmagoria,* two miscellaneous volumes, teem with promise and performance. Always acute and never coarse——

Shepherd. Qualities seldom separable in a woman. See Leddy Morgan.

North. But Miss Jewsbury is an agreeable exception. Always acute and never coarse, this amiable and most ingenious young lady——

Shepherd. Is she bonny?

North. I believe she is, James. But I do not pretend to be positive on that point, for the only time I ever had the

[1] *Wunna*—will not. [2] Afterwards Mrs Fletcher.

pleasure of seeing Miss Jewsbury, it was but for a momentary glance among the mountains. Mounted on a pretty pony, in a pretty rural straw-hat, and pretty rural riding-habit, with the sunshine of a cloudless heaven blended on her countenance with that of her own cloudless soul, the young author of *Phantasmagoria* rode smilingly along a beautiful vale, with the illustrious Wordsworth, whom she venerates, pacing in his poetical way by her side, and pouring out poetry in that glorious recitative of his, till "the vale was overflowing with the sound." Wha, Jamie, wadna hae looked bonny in sic a predicament?

Shepherd. Mony a ane wad hae looked desperate ugly in sic a predicament—far mair uglier than when walking on fit wi' some respectable commonplace young man, in a gingham gown, by the banks of a canal in a level kintra. Place a positively plain woman in a poetical predicament, especially where she doesna clearly comprehend the signification o't, and yet has been tauld that it is incumbent on her to show that she enjoys it, and it is really painfu' to ane's feelin's to see hoo muckle plainer she gets aye the langer she glowers, till at last it's no easy to thole the face o' her; but you are forced to turn awa your head, or to steek your een, neither o' whilk modes o' procedure perhaps is altogether consistent with the maist perfeck propriety o' mainners that ought ever to subsist atween the twa different sexes.

North. My dear James ——

Shepherd. I'm thinkin Miss Jewsbury maun be a bit bonny lassie, wi' an expressive face and fine figure; and, no to minch the maitter, let me just tell you at ance, that it's no in your power, Mr North, to praise wi' ony warmth o' cordiality either an ugly woman or an auld ane; but let them be but young and fresh and fair, or "black but comely," and then hoo—you wicked rabiawtor—do you keep casting a sheep's ee upon the cutties! pretendin a' the while that it's their *genius* you're admirin—whereas, it's no their genius ava,[1] but the living temple in which it is enshrined.

North. I plead guilty to that indictment. Ugly women are shocking anomalies, that ought to be hunted, hooted, and hissed out of every civilised and Christian community into a convent in Cockaigne. But no truly ugly woman ever yet wrote

[1] *Ava*—at all.

a truly beautiful poem the length of her little finger; and when beauty and genius kindle up the same eyes, why, gentle Shepherd, tell me why should Christopher North not fall down on his knees and adore the divinity of his waking dreams?

Shepherd. The seldomer, sir, you fall doun on your knees the better; for some day or ither you'll find it no such easy maitter to get up again, and the adored divinity of your waking dreams may have to ring the bell for the servant lad or lass to help you on your feet, as I have somewhere read a French leddy had to do in regard to Mr Gibbons o' the Decline and Fa'.

North. Nor must our festal board, that happy night, miss the light of the countenance of the fascinating Mrs Jameson.

Shepherd. Wha's she?

North. Read ye never the *Diary of an Ennuyée?*

Shepherd. O' a what? An N, O, E? Is't a man or a woman's initials?

North. Nor the *Loves of the Poets?*

Shepherd. Only what was in the Maugazin. But oh! sir, yon were maist beautifu' specimens o' eloquent and impassionat prose composition as ever drapped like hinny frae woman's lips. We maun hae Mrs Jameson—we maun indeed. And wull ye hear till me, sir, there's a fine enthusiastic bit lassie, ca'd Browne[1]—Ada Browne, I think, wha maun get an inveet, if she's no ower young to gang out to sooper;—but Miss Mitford, or Mrs Mary Howitt, will aiblins bring the bit timid cretur under their wing—and as for mysel, I shall be as kind till her as if she were my ain dochter.

North.—

> "Visions of Glory, spare my aching sight—
> Ye unborn Noctes, press not on my soul!"

Shepherd. What think ye, sir, o' the dogmas that high imagination is incompatible wi' high intellect, and that as Science flourishes Poetry decays?

[1] "This young lady was Mary Ann Browne, whose poem of 'Ada' was published in 1827, before she was fifteen. Many other poetical works followed in due course of time, of which 'Ignatia,' a passionate tale of love, was the best. She contributed many articles to the *Dublin University Magazine*. She was married in her twenty-ninth year to Mr James Gray (a nephew of the Ettrick Shepherd), and went with him to reside in Ireland, where she died in 1844."—*American Editor.*

North. The dogmata of dunces beyond the reach of redemption. Imagination, my dear James, as you who possess it must know, is Intellect working according to certain laws of feeling or passion. A man may have a high Intellect with little or no imagination; but he cannot have a high Imagination with little or no Intellect. The Intellect of Homer, Dante, Milton, and Shakespeare, was higher than that of Aristotle, Newton, and Bacon. When elevated by feeling into Imagination, their Intellect became transcendent—and thus were they poets—the noblest name by far and away that belongs to any of the children of men. So much, in few words, for the first dogma of the dunces. Is it damned?

Shepherd. I dinna dout. What o' the second?

North. That the blockheads, there too, bray the most asinine assertion that was ever laboriously elongated from the lungs of an Emeritus donkey retired from public life, to his native common on an annual allowance of thistles.

Shepherd. That's funny aneuch. You're a curious cretur, sir.

North. Pray, what is Science? True knowledge of mind and matter, as far as it is permitted to us to know truly anything of the world without and the world within us, congenial in their coexistence.

Shepherd. That soun's weel, and maun be the right definition. Say on—you've a pleasant vice.

North. What is Poetry? The true exhibition in musical and metrical speech of the thoughts of humanity when coloured by its feelings, throughout the whole range of the physical, moral, intellectual, and spiritual regions of its being.

Shepherd. That's shooblime. I wuss I could get it aff by heart to spoot at the petty soopies o' the Blues. But I fear that I suld forget some o' the prime words—the fundamental features on which the feelosophical definition hinges, and fa' into ower great nonsense.

North. You thus see with half an eye, James, that Poetry and Science are identical. Or rather, that as Imagination is the highest kind of Intellect, so Poetry is the highest kind of Science.

Shepherd. I see't as plain as a pike-staff, or the nose on your face. Indeed, plainer than the latter simile, for your face being still in coom, or, as you said, in cork, your nasal promontory is involved in deepest shadow, and is in fack

invisible on the general surface, and amang the surroundin scenery o' your face.

North. Thus, James, it is only in an age of Science that anything worthy the name of Poetry can exist. In a rude age there may be bursts of passion—of imagination even, which, if you, or any other man whom I esteem, insist on calling them poetry, I am willing so to designate. In that case, almost all human language is poetry, nor am I sure that from the province of such inspiration are we justified in excluding the cawing of rooks, or the gabbling of geese, and certainly not the more impassioned lyrical effusions of monkeys.

Shepherd. Queer deevils, monkeys!

North. Will any antiquary or archæologist show me a bit of poetry as broad as the palm of my hand, worth the toss up of a tinker's farthing, the produce of uncivilised man? O lord! James, is not such stuff sufficient to sicken a whole livery stable! In the light of knowledge alone can the eye of the soul see the soul—or those flaming ministers, the Five Senses——

Shepherd. Seven, if you please — and few aneuch too, considerin the boundless extent and variety o' the universe.

North. Or the senses do their duties to the soul,—for though she is their queen, and sends them forth night and day to do her work among the elements, yet seem they, material though they be, to be kith and kin even unto her their sovereign, and to be imbued with some divine power evanescent with the moment of corporeal death, and separation of the spirit.

Shepherd. Hech!

North. Therefore, not till man, and nature, and human life lie in the last light of Science—that is, of knowledge and of truth—will Poetry reach the acme of its triumph. As Campbell sings,—

> "Come, bright Improvement, on the car of Time,
> And rule the spacious world from clime to clime;"

and still Poetry will be here below Prime Minister and High Priest of Nature.

Shepherd (*with a gaunt*[1]). What's that you was saying about the Prime Minister and the High Priest? Is the Dyuck[2]

[1] *Gaunt*—a yawn.

[2] The Duke of Wellington, at this time Prime Minister.

gaun out? and has onything happened to the Archbishop of Canterbury?

North. But it is further asserted, that the human mind will cease to look on Nature poetically, or poetically to feel her laws, in proportion as the Revelation becomes ampler and clearer of her mysteries, and that's——

Shepherd. I begin to think, sir, that considerin the natur o' a twa-haun'd crack, you're rather trespassing upon the rights o' the ither interlocutor in the dialogue—and that it would be only ordinar gude mainners to alloo me to——

North. As if an ignorant were higher and more imaginative, that is, more poetical, than an enlightened wonder!

Shepherd. Sumphs!

North. Does the philosopher who knows what a rainbow is, cease with delight to regard the glory as it spans the storm? Does the knowledge of the fact, that lightning is electricity, destroy the grandeur of those black abysses in the thunderous clouds, which flashing it momentarily reveals, and then leaves in eternal darkness? Clouds, rain, dew, light, heat, cold, frost, snow, &c. are all pretty well understood nowadays by people in general, and yet who feels them to be on that account unpoetical? A drop of dew on a flower or leaf, a tear on cheek or eye, will be felt to be beautiful, after all mankind have become familiarly acquainted with the perfected philosophy of all secretions.

Shepherd. Are you quite positive in your ain mind, that you're no gettin tiresome, sir? Let's order sooper.

North. Well, James, be it so.

(*As the* SHEPHERD *rises to ring the bell, the Timepiece strikes Ten, and* PICARDY *enters with his Tail.*)

Shepherd. Ye dinna mean to say, Mr Awmrose, that that's a' the sooper? Only the roun', a cut o' sawmon, beefsteaks, and twa brodds o' eisters! This 'ill never do, Awmrose. Remember there's a couple o' us—and that a sooper that may be no amiss for ane, may be little better than starvation to twa; especially if them twa be in the prime and vigour o' life, hae come in frae the kintra, and got yaup[1] ower some half-dizzen jugs o' strang whusky-toddy.

Ambrose (*bowing*). The boiled turkey and the roasted ducks

[1] *Yaup*—hungry,

will be on the table forthwith — unless, Mr Hogg, you would prefer a goose which last week won a sweepstakes——

Shepherd. What? at Perth races? Was he a bluid-guse, belangin to a member o' the Caledonian Hunt?

Ambrose (*smiling*). No, Mr Hogg — There was a competition between six parishes which should produce the greatest goose, and I had the good fortune to purchase the successful candidate, who was laid, hatched, and brought up at the Manse of——

Shepherd. I ken the successful candidate brawly—Wasna he a white ane, wi' a tremendous doup that soopt the grun', and hadna he contracted a habit o' turnin in the taes o' his left fit?

Ambrose. The same, sir. He weighed, ready for spit, twenty pounds jump—feathers and giblets four pounds more. Nor do I doubt, Mr North, that had your Miss Nevison had him for a fortnight longer at the Lodge, she would have fattened him (for he is a gander) up to thirty,—that is to say, with all his paraphernalia.

Shepherd. Show him in; raw or roasted, show him in.

(*Enter* KING PEPIN *and* SIR DAVID GAM, *with the successful candidate, supported by* MON. CADET *and* TAPPYTOORIE.)

What a strapper! Puir chiel, I wadna hae kent him, sae changed is he frae the time I last saw him at the Manse, takin a walk in the cool o' the Saturday e'ening, wi' his wife and family, and ever and anon gabblin to himsel in a sort o' undertone, no unlike a minister rehearsin his sermon for the coming Sabbath.

North. How comes he to be ready roasted, Ambrose?

Ambrose. A party of twenty are about to sup in the Saloon, and——

Shepherd. Set him doun; and if the gentlemen wuss to see North cut up a guse, show the score into the Snuggery.

[*The successful candidate is safely got on the board.*

Hear hoo the table groans!

North. I feel my limbs rather stiffish with sitting so long. Suppose, James, that we have a little leap-frog.

Shepherd. Wi' a' my heart. Let me arrange the forces roun' the table. Mr Awmrose, staun' you there—Mon. Cadet, fa' intil the rear o' your brither — Pippin, twa yairds ahint

Awmrose *junior* — Sir Dawvit, dress by his Majesty — and Tappytoorie, turn your back upon me. Noo, lout doun a' your heads. Here goes—Keep the pie warm.

[*The* SHEPHERD *vaults away, and the whole circle is in perpetual motion;* NORTH *distinguished by his agility in the ring.*

North (*piping*). Heads all up—no louting. There, James, I topped you without touching a hair.

Shepherd. Mirawculus auld man! A lameter too! I never felt his hauns on my shouther!

Ambrose. I'm rather short of breath, and must drop out of the line.

[MR AMBROSE *drops out of the line, and his place is supplied by* TICKLER, *who at that moment has entered the room unobserved.*

Shepherd (*coming unexpectedly upon Tickler*). Here's a steeple! What glamoury's this?

North. Stand aloof, James, and I'll clear the weathercock on the spire.

[NORTH, *using his crutch as a leaping-pole, clears* TICKLER *in grand style; but* TAPPYTOORIE, *the next in the series, boggles, and remains balanced on* SOUTHSIDE'S *shoulders.*

Tickler. Firm on your pins, North. I'm coming.

[TICKLER, *with* TAPPYTOORIE *on his shoulders, clears* CHRISTOPHER *in a canter.*

Omnes. Huzza! huzza! huzza!

North (*addressing* TICKLER). Mr Tickler, it gives me great pleasure to present to you the Silver Frog, which I am sure will never be disgraced by your leaping.

[TICKLER *stoops his head, and* NORTH *hangs the Prize Silver Frog, by a silver chain, round his neck:* TAPPYTOORIE *dismounts, and the Three sit down to supper.*

Shepherd. Some sax or seven slices o' the breist, sir, and dinna spare the stuffin.—Mr Awmrose, gie my trencher a gude clash o' aipple-sass.—Potawtoes. Thank ye.—Noo, some o' the smashed.—Tappy, the porter.—What guse!!!

Tickler. Cut the apron off the bishop, North; but you must have a longer spoon to get into the interior.

Ambrose. Here is a punch-ladle, sir.

Shepherd. Gie him the great big silver soup ane.—Sic sage!

Tickler. Why, that is liker the leg of a sheep than of a goose.

Shepherd. Awmrose, ma man, dinna forget the morn[1] to let us hae the giblets.—Pippin, the mustard.—Mr North, as naebody seems to be axin for't, gie me the bishop's apron, it seems sappy. What are ye gaun to eat yoursel, sir? Dinna mind helpin me, but attend to your nain sooper.

North. James, does not the side of the breast which I have now been hewing, remind you of Salisbury Crags?

Shepherd. It's verra precipitous. The skeleton maun be sent to the College Museum, to staun' at the fit o' the elephant, the rhinoceros, and the cammyleopardawlis; and that it mayna be spiled by unskilful workmanship, I vote we finish him cauld the morn afore we yoke to the giblet-pie.

[*Carried nem. con.*

Tickler. Goose always gives me a pain in my stomach. But to purchase pleasure at a certain degree of pain, is true philosophy. Besides, in pleasure, I belong to the sect Epicurean; and in pain, am a budge docter of the Stoic Fur; therefore I shall eat on. So, my dear North, another plateful. James, a caulker?

Shepherd. What's your wull?

Tickler. Oh! nothing at all.—Ambrose, the Glenlivet to Mr North.—Mr Hogg, I believe, never takes it during supper.

[*The* Shepherd *tips* Ambrose *the wink, and the gurgle goes round the table.*

[*Silence, with slight interruptions, and no conversation for about three quarters of an hour.* Nathan Gurney.

Shepherd. I had nae previous idea that steaks eat sae capital after guse. Some sawmon.

North. Stop, James. Let all be removed, except the fish—to wit, the salmon, the rizzards, the speldrins, the herrings, and the oysters.

Shepherd. And bring some mair fresh anes. Mr Awmrose, you maun mak a deal o' siller by sellin your eister-shells for manur to the farmers a' roun' about Embro'? They're as gude's lime—indeed, I'm thinkin they *are* lime—a sort o' sea-lime, growing on rocks by the shore, and a coatin at the

[1] *The morn*—to-morrow.

same time to leevin and edible creturs. Oh, the wonnerfu' warks o' Nature!

North. Then wheeling the circular to the fire, let us have a parting jug or two——

Shepherd. Each?

(*Enter* MR AMBROSE *with* LORD ELDON.)

North. Na! here's his Lordship full to the brim. He holds exactly one gallon, Imperial Measure; and that quantity, according to Mrs Ambrose's recipe, cannot hurt us——

Shepherd. God bless the face o' him!

Tickler. Pray, James, is it a true bill that you have had the hydrophobia?

Shepherd. Ower true; but I'll gie you a description o't at our next. Meanwhile, let's ca' in that puir cretur Gurney, and gie him a drap drink. Nawthan! Nawthan! Nawthan!

Gurney (*in a shrill voice from the interior of the Ear of Dionysius*). Here—here—here.

Shepherd. What'n a vice! Like a young ratton[1] squaakin ahint the lath and plaister.

North. No rattons here, James. Mr Gurney is true as steel.

Shepherd. Reserve that short similie for yoursel, sir? O sir, but you're elastic as a drawn Damascus swurd. Lean a' your wecht on't, wi' the pint on the grun, but fear na, while it bends, that it will break; for back again frae the semicircle springs it in a second intil the straught line; and woe be to him wha daurs that cut and thrust! for it gangs through his body like licht through a wundow, and before the sinner kens he is wounded, you turn him ower on his back, sir, stane-dead!

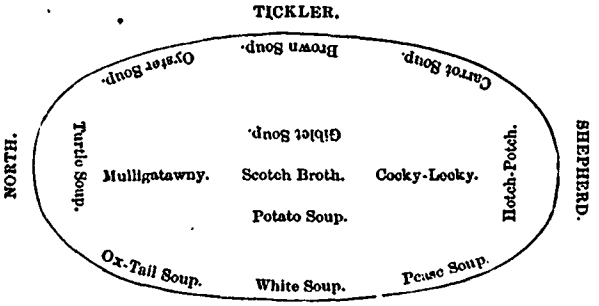
[MR GURNEY *joins the party, and the curtain of course falls.*

[1] *Ratton*—rat.

XXIII.

(APRIL 1830.)

Scene, — *The Saloon, illuminated by the grand Gas Orrery. Time,*—*First of April*—*Six o'clock. Present,*—NORTH, *the* ENGLISH OPIUM-EATER,[1] *the* SHEPHERD, TICKLER, *in Court Dresses. The three celebrated young Scottish* LEANDERS, *with their horns, in the hanging gallery.* AIR, *"Brose and Brochan and a'."*



Shepherd. An' that's an Orrery! The infinitude o' the starry heavens reduced sae as to suit the ceilin o' the Saloon! Whare's Virgo?

[1] Thomas De Quincey has been already referred to more than once in the course of these dialogues. Now he is introduced as an interlocutor; and, if I may be permitted to say so, the general character of his conversation has been imitated not infelicitously by his friend the Professor. But the reader who would learn what Mr De Quincey himself is *in propriâ personâ*—what fascinating powers of eloquence he possesses—how deep his poetical sensibilities are—and how profound his philosophical acumen—must be referred to his collected works now (1855) in the course of publication, (Hogg, Edinburgh; Groombridge, London).

Tickler. Yonder she is, James—smiling in the shade of——

Shepherd. I see her—just aboon the cocky-leeky. Weel, sic anither contrivance! Some o' the stars and planets—moons and suns lichter than ithers, I jalouse, by lettin in upon them a greater power o' coal-gas; and ithers again, just by moderatin the pipe-conductors, faint and far awa in the system, sae that ye scarcely ken whether they are lichted wi' the gawseous vapour ava, or only a sort o' fine, tender, delicate porcelain, radiant in its ain transparent nature, and though thin, yet stronger than the storms.

North. The first astronomers were shepherds——

Shepherd. Ay, Chaldean shepherds like mysel—but no a mother's son o' them could hae written the Manuscripp. Ha, ha, ha!

Tickler. What a misty evening!

Shepherd. Nae wonder—wi' thirteen soups a' steamin up to the skies! O but the Orrery is sublime the noo, in its shroud! Naethin like hotch-potch for geein a-dim grandeur to the stars. See, yonder Venus—peerless planet—shining like the face o' a virgin bride through her white nuptial veil! He's a grim chiel yon Saturn. Nae wonder he devourit his weans—he has the coontenance o' a cannibal. Thank you, Mr Awmrose, for opening the door—for this current o' air has sweept awa the mists frae heaven, and gien us back the beauty o' the celestial spheres.

North (*aside to the English Opium-Eater*). You hear, Mr De Quincey, how he begins to blaze even before broth.

English Opium-Eater (*aside to North*). I have always placed Mr Hogg, *in genius*, far above Burns. He is indeed "of imagination all compact." Burns had strong sense—and strong sinews—and brandished a pen pretty much after the same fashion as he brandished a flail. You never lose sight of the thresher——

Shepherd. Dinna abuse Burns, Mr De Quinshy. Neither you nor ony ither Englishman can thoroughly understaun' three sentences o' his poems——

English Opium-Eater (*with much animation*). I have for some years past longed for an opportunity to tear into pieces that gross national delusion, born of prejudice, ignorance, and bigotry, in which, from highest to lowest, all literary classes of Scotchmen are as it were incarnated—to wit, a belief,

strong as superstition, that all their various dialects must be as unintelligible, as I grant that most of them are uncouth and barbarous, to English ears—even to those of the most accomplished and consummate scholars. Whereas, to a Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, Saxon, German, French, Italian, Spanish — and let me add, Latin and Greek scholar, there is not even a monosyllable that——

Shepherd. What's *a gowpen o' glaur?*

English Opium-Eater. Mr Hogg — Sir, I will not be interrupted——

Shepherd. You cannot tell. It's just *twa neif-fu's o' clarts.*[1]

North. James—James—James!

Shepherd. Kit — Kit — Kit. But beg your pardon, Mr De Quinshy — afore denner I'm aye unco snappish. I admit you're a great grammarian. But kennin something o' a language by bringin to bear upon't a' the united efforts o' knowledge and understaunin'— baith first-rate — is ae thing, and feelin every breath and every shadow that keeps playin ower a' its syllables, as if by a natural and born instinct, is anither; the first you may aiblins hae—naebody likelier,—but to the second, nae man may pretend that hasna had the happiness and the honour o' havin been born and bred in bonny Scotland. What can ye ken o' Kilmeny?

English Opium-Eater (*smiling graciously*). 'Tis a ballad breathing the sweetest, simplest, wildest spirit of Scottish traditionary song—music, as of some antique instrument long lost, but found at last in the Forest among the decayed roots of trees, and touched, indeed, as by an instinct, by the only man who could reawaken its sleeping chords—the Ettrick Shepherd.

Shepherd. Na—if you say that sincerely—and I never saw a broo smoother wi' truth than your ain—I maun qualify my former apothegm, and alloo you to be an exception frae the general rule. I wush, sir, you would write a Glossary o' the Scottish Language. I ken naebody fitter.

North. Our distinguished guest is aware that this is "All Fool's Day,"—and must, on that score, pardon these court-dresses. We consider them, my dear sir, appropriate to this Anniversary.

Shepherd. Mine wasna originally a coort-dress. It's the

[1] Two handfuls of mud.

uniform o' the Border Club. But nane o' the ither members would wear them, except me and the late Dyuk o' Buccleuch. So when the King cam to Scotland, and expeckit to be introduced to me at Holyroodhouse, I got the tiler at Yarrow-Ford to cut it doun after a patron[1] frae Embro'——

English Opium-Eater. Green and gold—to my eyes the most beautiful of colours—the one characteristic of earth, the other of heaven—and, therefore, the two united, emblematic of genius.

Shepherd. Oh! Mr De Quinshy—sir, but you're a pleasant cretur—and were I ask't to gie a notion o' your mainners to them that had never seen you, I should just use twa words, Urbanity and Amenity—meanin, by the first, that saft bricht polish that a man gets by leevin amang gentlemen scholars in touns and cities, burnished on the solid metal o' a happy natur hardened by the rural atmosphere o' the pure kintra air, in which I ken you hae ever delighted; and, by the ither, a peculiar sweetness, amaist like that o' a woman's, yet sae far frae bein' feminine, as masculine as that o' Allan Ramsay's ain *Gentle Shepherd*—and breathin o' a harmonious union between the heart, the intelleck, and the imagination, a' the three keepin their ain places, and thus makin the vice,[2] speech, gesture, and motion o' a man as composed as a figure on a pictur by some painter that was a master in his art, and produced his effects easily—and ane kens nae hoo—by his lichts and shadows. Mr North, amna[3] I richt in the thocht, if no in the expression?

North. You have always known my sentiments, James——

Shepherd. I'm thinkin we had better lay aside our swurds. They're kittle dealin, when a body's stannin or walkin; but the very deevil's in them when ane claps his doup on a chair, for here's the hilt o' mine interferin wi' my ladle-hand.

Tickler. Why, James, you have buckled it on the wrong side.

Shepherd. What? Is the richt the wrang?

North. Let us all untackle. Mr Ambrose, hang up each man's sword on his own hat-peg.—There.

Shepherd. O Mr de Quinshy! but you look weel in a single-breisted snuff-olive, wi' cut-steel buttons, figured waistcoat, and——

English Opium-Eater. There is a beautiful propriety, Mr

[1] *Patron*—pattern. [2] *Vice*—voice. [3] *Amna*—am not.

Hogg, in a court-dress, distinguished as it is, both by material and form, from the apparel suitable to the highest occasions immediately below the presence of royalty, just as *that other* apparel is distinguished from the costume worn on the less ceremonious——

Shepherd. Eh?

English Opium-Eater. Occasions of civilised life,—and *that* again in due degree from *that* sanctioned by custom, in what I may call, to use the language of Shakespeare, and others of our elder dramatists, the "worky-day" world,—whether it be in those professions peculiar, or nearly so, to towns and cities, or belonging more appropriately—though the distinction, perhaps, is popular rather than philosophical—to rural districts on either side of your beautiful river the Tweed.

Shepherd. O, sir! but I'm unco fond o' the English accent. It's like an instrument wi' a' the strings o' silver,—and though I canna help thinkin that you speak rather a wee ower slow, yet there's sic music in your vice, that I'm just perfectly enchanted wi' the soun', while a sense o' truth prevents me frae sayin that I aye a'thegither comprehend the meaning,—for that's aye, written or oral alike, sae desperate metapheesical.—But what soup will you tak, sir. Let me recommend the hotch-potch.

English Opium-Eater. I prefer vermicelli.

Shepherd. What? Worms! They gar me scunner,—the verra look o' them. Sae, you're a worm-eater, sir, as weel's an opium-eater?

English Opium-Eater. Mr Wordsworth, sir, I think it is, who says, speaking of the human being under the thraldom of the senses,—

"He is a slave, the meanest we can meet."

Shepherd. I beseech ye, my dear sir, no to be angry sae sune on in the afternoon. There's your worms—and I wuss you muckle gude o' them—only compare them—Thank you, Mr Tickler—wi' this bowl-deep trencher o' hotch-potch—an emblem o' the haill vegetable and animal creation.

Tickler. Why, James, though now invisible to the naked eye, boiled down as they are in baser matter, that tureen on which your face has for some minutes been fixed as gloatingly as that of a Satyr on a sleeping Wood-nymph, or of Pan himself on Matron Cybele, contains, as every naturalist knows,

some scores of snails, a gowpenful of gnats, countless caterpillars, of our smaller British insects numbers without number numberless as the sea-shore sands—

Shepherd. No at this time o' the year, you gowk. You're thinking o' simmer colleyfloor——

Tickler. But their larvæ, James——

Shepherd. Confound their larvæ! Awmrose! the pepper. (*Dashes in the pepper along with the silver top of the cruet.*) Pity me! whare's the cruet? It has sunk doun intil the hotch-potch, like a mailed horse and his rider intil a swamp. I maun tak tent no to swallow the bog-trotter. What the deevil, Awmrose, you've gien me the Cayawne!!

Mr Ambrose. (*tremens.*) My dear sir, it was Tappytoorie.

Shepherd (*to Tappy*). You wee sinner, did ye tak me for Mosshy Shaubert?[1]

English Opium-Eater. I have not seen it recorded, Mr Hogg, in any of the Public Journals, at least it was not so in the *Standard*,—in fact the only newspaper I now read, and an admirable evening paper it is, unceasingly conducted with consummate ability,—that that French charlatan had hitherto essayed Cayenne pepper; and indeed such an exhibition would be preposterous, seeing that the lesser is contained within the greater, and consequently all the hot varieties of that plant—all the possibilities of the pepper-pod—are included within Phosphorus and Prussic acid. Meanly as I think of the logic——

Shepherd. O ma mouth! ma mouth!—Logic indeed! I didna think there had been sic a power o' pepper about a' the premises.

English Opium-Eater. The only conclusion that can be legitimately drawn——

Shepherd. Whisht wi' your College clavers—and, Awmrose, gie me a caulker o' Glenlivet to cool the roof o' my pallet. Ma tongue's like red-het airn—and blisters ma verra lips. Na! it 'ill melt the siller-spoon——

North. I pledge you, my dear James——

English Opium-Eater. Vermicelli soup, originally Italian, has been so long naturalised in this island, that it may now almost be said, by those not ambitious of extremest accuracy of thought and expression, to be indigenous in Britain—and as it sips somewhat insipid, may I use the freedom, Mr Tick-

[1] See *ante*, p. 27.

ler—scarcely pardonable, perhaps, from our short acquaintance—to request you to join me in a glass of the same truly Scottish liquor?

Tickler. Most happy indeed to cultivate the friendship of Mr De Quincey. [*The Four turn up their little fingers.*

Shepherd. Mirawculus! My tongue's a' at ance as cauld 's the rim o' a cart-wheel on a winter's nicht! My pallet cool as the lift o' a spring-mornin! And the inside o' my mouth just like a wee mountain-well afore sunrise, when the bit muirland birdies are hoppin on its margin, about to wat their whussles in the blessed beverage, after their love-dreams amang the dewy heather!

English Opium-Eater. I would earnestly recommend it to you, Mr Hogg, to abstain——

Shepherd. Thank you, sir, for your timeous warnin—for, without thinkin what I was about, I was just on the verra eve o' fa'in to again till the self-same fiery trencher. It's no everybody that has your philosophical composure. But it sits weel on you, sir—and I like baith to look and listen to you; for, in spite o' your classical learning, and a' your outlandish logic, you're at a' times—and I'm nae bad judge—shepherd as I am—*intus et in cute*—that is, tooth and nail—naething else but a perfeck gentleman. But oh, you're a lazy cretur, man, or you would hae putten out a dizzen volumms sin' the "Confessions."

English Opium-Eater. I am at present, my dear friend—allow me to call myself so—in treaty with Mr Blackwood for a novel——

Shepherd. In ae volumm—in ae volumm, I hope—and that 'ill tie you doun to whare your strength lies, condensation at ance vigorous and exquisite—like a man succinct for hap-step-and-loup on the greensward—each spang langer than anither—till he clears a peat hand-barrow at the end like a catastrophe.—Hae I eaten anither dish o' hotch-potch, think ye, sirs, without bein' aware o't?

Tickler. No, James—North changed the fare upon you, and you have devoured, in a fit of absence, about half-a-bushel of pease.

Shepherd. I'm glad it wasna carrots—for they aye gie me a sair belly.—But hae ye been at the Exhibition o' Pictures by leevin artists at the Scottish Academy, Mr North,—and what think ye o't?

North. I look in occasionally, James, of a morning, before the bustle begins, for a crowd is not for a crutch.

Shepherd. But ma faith, a crutch is for a crood, as is weel kent o' yours, by a' the blockheads in Britain.—Is't gude the year?

North. Good, bad, and indifferent, like all other mortal exhibitions. In landscape, we sorely miss Mr Thomson[1] of Duddingston.

Shepherd. What can be the maitter wi' the minister?—He's no deid?

North. God forbid! But Williams[2] is gone—dear delightful Williams—with his aerial distances into which the imagination sailed as on wings, like a dove gliding through sunshine into gentle gloom—with his shady foregrounds, where Love and Leisure reposed—and his middle regions, with towering cities grove-embowered, solemn with the spirit of the olden time—and all, all embalmed in the beauty of those deep Grecian skies!

Shepherd. He's deid. What matters it? In his virtues he was happy, and in his genius he is immortal. Hoots, man! If tears are to drap for ilka freen "who is not," our een wad be seldom dry.—Tak some mair turtle.

North. Mr Thomson of Duddingston is now our greatest landscape painter. In what sullen skies he sometimes shrouds the solitary moors!

Shepherd. And wi' what blinks o' beauty he often brings out frae beneath the clouds the spire o' some pastoral parish kirk, till you feel it is the Sabbath!

North. Time and decay crumbling his castles seem to be warring against the very living rock—and we feel their endurance in their desolation.

Shepherd. I never look at his roarin rivers, wi' a' their precipices, without thinkin, some hoo or ither, o' Sir William Wallace! They seem to belang to an unconquerable country.

North. Yes, James! he is a patriotic painter. Moor, mountain and glen—castle, hall, and hut—all breathe sternly or sweetly o' auld Scotland. So do his seas and his firths—roll, roar, blacken and whiten with Caledonia—from the Mull of Galloway to Cape Wrath. Or when summer stillness is upon them, are not all the soft shadowy pastoral hills Scottish, that in their still deep transparency invert their summits in the transfiguring magic of the far-sleeping main?

[1] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 69, note 1.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 316, note.

Tickler. William Simpson, now gone to live in London, is in genius no whit inferior to Mr Thomson, and superior in mastery over the execution of the Art.

North. A first-rater. Ewbank's moonlights this season are meritorious; but 'tis difficult to paint Luna, though she is a still sitter in the sky. Be she veiled nun—white-robed vestal—blue-cinctured huntress—full-orbed in Christian meekness—or, bright misbeliever! brow-rayed with the Turkish crescent—still meetest is she, spiritual creature, for the Poet's love!

Shepherd. They tell me that a lad o' the name o' Fleming, frae the west kintra, has shown some bonny landscapes.

North. His pictures are rather deficient in depth, James—his scenes are scarcely sufficiently like portions of the solid globe—but he has a sense of beauty—and with that a painter may do almost anything—without it, nothing. For of the painter as of the poet, we may employ the exquisite image of Wordsworth, that beauty

"Pitches her tents before him."

For example, there is Gibb,[1] who can make a small sweet pastoral world out of a bank and a brae, a pond and a couple of cows, with a simple lassie sitting in her plaid upon the stump of an old tree. Or, if a morning rainbow spans the moor, he shows you brother and sister—it may be—or perhaps childish lovers—facing the showery wind—in the folds of the same plaid—straining merrily, with their collie before them, towards the hut whose smoke is shivered as soon as it reaches the tops of the sheltering grove. Gibb is full of feeling and genius.

Shepherd. But isna his colourin ower blue?

North. No, James. Show me anything bluer than the sky—at its bluest.—Not even *her* eye——

Shepherd. What! Mrs Gentle? Her een aye seemed to me to be greenish.

North. Hush, blasphemer! Their zones are like the skylight of the longest night in the year—when all the earth lies half asleep and half awake in the beauty of happy dreams.

Shepherd. Hech! hech!

"O love! love! love!
Love's like a dizziness,
It wunna let a puir bodie
Gang about his bizziness!"

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[1] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 315, note 2.

English Opium-Eater. I have often admired the prodigious power of perspective displayed in the large landscapes of Nasmyth.[1] He gives you at one *coup-d'œil* a metropolitan city—with its river, bridges, towers, and temples—engirdled with groves, and far-retiring all around the garden-fields, tree-dropped, or sylvan-shaded, of merry England. I allude now to a noble picture of London.

North. And all his family are geniuses like himself. In the minutiæ of nature, Peter is perfect—it would not be easy to say which of his unmarried daughters excels her sisters in truth of touch—though I believe the best judges are disposed to give Mrs Terry the palm—who now—since the death of her lamented husband — teaches painting in London with eminent success.

Tickler. Colvin Smith[2] has caught Jeffrey's countenance at last — and a fine countenance it is — alive with intellect—armed at all points—acute without a quibble—clothed all over with cloudless perspicacity — and eloquent on the silent canvass, as if all the air within the frame were murmuring with winged words.

North. Not murmuring—his voice tinkles like a silver bell.

Shepherd. But wha can tell that frae the canvass?

North. James, on looking at a portrait, you carry along with you all the characteristic individualities of the original —his voice—his gesture—his action—his motion—his manner—and thus the likeness is made up "of what you half-create and half-perceive,"—else dead—thus only spiritualised into perfect similitude.

Shepherd. Mr De Quinshy should hae said that!

English Opium-Eater. Pardon me, Mr Hogg, I could not have said it nearly so well—and in this case, I doubt not, most truly—as Mr North.

North. No one feature, perhaps, of Mr Jeffrey's face is very fine, except, indeed, his mouth, which is the firmest, and, at the same time, the mildest—the most resolute, and yet, at the same time, the sweetest, I ever saw—inferior in such mingled expression only to Canning's, which was perfect; but look on them all together, and they all act together in irresistible union;

[1] Mr Alexander Nasmyth was an eminent landscape-painter of Edinburgh. He died at a great age about 1840. He had a son (Peter), settled in London, who also rose to high distinction as a painter, who died in 1831.

[2] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 144, note 1.

forehead, eyes, cheeks, mouth, and chin, all declaring, as Burns said of Matthew Henderson, that "Francis is a bright man," —ever in full command of all his great and various talents, with just enough of genius to preserve them all in due order and subordination—for, with either more or less genius, we may not believe that his endowments could have been so finely, yet so firmly balanced, so powerful both in speculative and practical skill, making him at once, perhaps, on the whole, the most philosophic critic of his age, and, beyond all comparison, the most eloquent orator of his country.

English Opium-Eater. To much of that eulogium, Mr North, great as my admiration is of Mr Jeffrey's abilities, I must demur.

Shepherd. And me too.

Tickler. And I also.

North. Well, gentlemen, demur away; but such for many years has been my opinion, and 'tis the opinion of all Scotland.

English Opium-Eater. Since you speak of Mr Jeffrey, and of his achievements in law, literature, and philosophy, in Scotland, and without meaning to include the Southern Intellectual Empire of Britain, why, then, with one exception (*bowing to Mr North*), I do most cordially agree with you, though of his law I know nothing, and nothing of his oral eloquence, but judge of him solely from the *Edinburgh Review*, which (*bowing again to Mr North*), with the same conspicuous exception—maugre all its manifold and miserable mistakes—unquestionably stands—or did stand—for I have not seen a number of it since the April number of 1826—at the head of the Periodical Literature of the Age; and that the Periodical Literature of the Age is infinitely superior to all its other philosophical criticism—for example, the charlatanerie of the Schlegels, *et id genus omne*, is as certain—Mr Hogg, pardon me for imitating your illustrative imagery, or attempting to imitate what all the world allows to be inimitable—as that the hotch-potch which you are now swallowing, in spite of heat that seems breathed from the torrid zone——

Shepherd. It's no hotch-potch—this platefu's cocky-leeky.

English Opium-Eater. As that cocky-leeky which, though hot as purgatory (the company will pardon me for yielding to the influence of the *genius loci*), your mouth is, and for a quarter of an hour has been, vortex-like engulfing, transcends, to all that is best in animal and vegetable matter—worthy

indeed of Scotland's manly Shepherd—the *soup maigre*, that, attenuated almost to invisibility, drenches the odiously-guttural gullet of some monkey Frenchman of the old school, by the incomprehensible interposition of Providence saved at the era of the Revolution from the guillotine:

Omnes! Bravo! bravo! bravo!—Encore! encore! encore!

Shepherd. That's capital—it's just me; gin ye were aye to speak that gate, man, folk would understaun' you. Let's hae a caulker thegither.—There's a gurgle—your health, sir—no forgettin the wife and the weans. It's a pity you're no a Scotchman.

North. John Watson's[1] "Lord Dalhousie"[2] is a noble picture. But John's always great—his works win upon you the longer you study them—and that, after all, is at once the test and the triumph of the art. On some portraits you at once exhaust your admiration; and are then ashamed of yourself for having mistaken the vulgar pleasure, so cheaply inspired, of a staring likeness, for that high emotion breathed from the mastery of the painter's skill—and blush to have doated on a daub.

Tickler. Duncan's[3] "Braw Wooer," from Burns's

> "Yestreen a braw wooer cam down the lang glen,
> And sair wi' his love he did deave me;
> I said there was naething I hated like men,—
> The deuce gang wi' him to believe me,"

is a masterpiece. What a fellow, James! Not unlike yourself in your younger days, perhaps—but without a particle of the light of genius that ever ennobles your rusticity, and makes the plaid on our incomparable Shepherd's shoulders graceful as the poet's mantle—But rather like some son of yours, James, of whom you had not chanced to think it worth your while to take any very particular notice, yet who, by hereditary talents, had made his way in the world up to head-shepherd on a four-thousand-acre hill-farm,—his face glowing with love and health like a peony over which a milk-pail had happened to be upset—bonnet cocked as crously on his hard

[1] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 48, note 2.

[2] The father of the distinguished Governor-General of India. He fought with great gallantry through the Peninsular war and at Waterloo.

[3] Thomas Duncan died in 1844. He painted "Christopher in his Sporting-jacket"—a picture of Professor Wilson in the possession of Mr John Blackwood.

brow as the comb upon the tappin o' chanticleer when sidling up, with dropped wing, to a favourite pullet—buckskin breeches, such as Burns used to wear himself, brown and burnished to a most perilous polish—and top-boots, the images of your own, my beloved boy—on which the journey down the lang glen has brought the summer-dust to blend with the well-greased blacking—broad chest, gorgeously apparelled in a flapped waistcoat, manifestly made for him by his great grandmother, out of the damask-hangings of a bed that once must have stood firm in a Ha' on four posts, though now haply in a hut but a trembling truckle—strong harn shirt, clean as a lily, bleached in the showery sunshine on a brent[1] gowany brae, nor untinged with a faint scent of thyme that, in oaken drawer, will lie odorous for years upon years,—and cravat with a knot like a love-posy, and two pointed depending stalks, tied in the gleam of a water-pail, or haply in the mirror of the pool in which that Apollo had just been floundering like a porpoise, and in which, when drought had dried the shallows, he had leistered many a fish impatient of the sea;—there, James, he sits on a bank, leaning and leering, a lost and love-sick man, yet not forgetful nor unconscious of the charms so prodigally lavished upon him both by nature and art, the BRAW WOOER, who may not fail in his suit, till blood be wersh as water, and flesh indeed fushionless as grass growing in a sandy desert.

Shepherd. Remember, Mr Tickler, what a lee-way you hae to mak up, on the sea o' soup, and be na sae descriptive, for we've a' gotten to windward; you seem to hae drapt anchor, and baith mainsail and foresail are flappin to the extremity o' their sheets.

Tickler. And is not she, indeed, James, a queenlike quean? What scorn and skaith in the large full orbs of her imperial eyes! How she tosses back her head in triumph, till the yellow lustre of her locks seems about to escape from the bondage of that ribbon, the hope-gift of another suitor who wooed her under happier auspices, among last-year's "rigs o' barley," at winter's moonless midnight, beneath the barn-balk where roosts the owl,—by spring's dewy eve on the dim primrose bank, while the lark sought his nest among the green braird, descending from his sunset-song!

[1] *Brent*—high; steep.

Shepherd. Confound me—if this be no just perfectly intolerable—Mr North, Mr De Quinshy, Mr Tickler, and a', men, women, and children, imitatin ma style o' colloquial oratory, till a' that's specific and original about me 's lost in universal plagiarism.

Tickler. Why, James, your genius is as contagious—as infectious as the plague,—if, indeed, it be not epidemical—like a fever in the air.

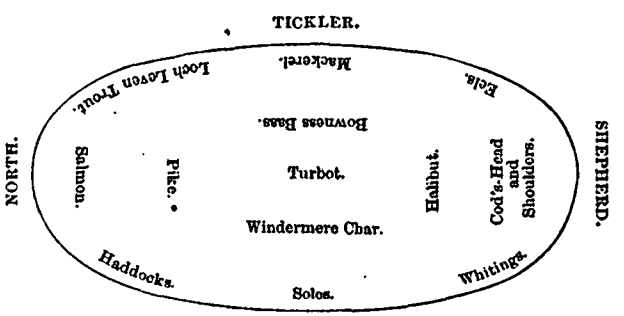
Shepherd. You're a' glad to sook up the miasmata. But, mercy on us! a' the tureens seem to me amaist dried up—as laigh's wells in midsummer drought. The vermicelli, especially, is drained to its last worms. Mr De Quinshy, you've an awfu' appeteet!

English Opium-Eater. I shall dine to-day entirely on soup,—for your Edinburgh beef and mutton, however long kept, are difficult of mastication,—the sinews seeming to me all to go transversely, thus,—and not longitudinally,—so——

North. Hark! my gold repeater is smiting seven. We allow an hour, Mr De Quincey, to each course—and then——

[*The* LEANDERS *play "The Boatie Rows,"—the door flies open,—enter* PICARDY *and his clan.*

SECOND COURSE—FISH.



Shepherd. I'm sure we canna be sufficiently gratefu' for having got rid o' a' thae empty tureens o' soup—so let us noo set in for serious eatin, and tackle to the inhabitants o' the Great Deep. What's that bit body, North, been about?

Daidlin[1] wi' the mock-turtle. I hate a' things mock—soups, pearls, fause tails, baith bustles and queues, wigs, cauves, religion, freenship, love, glass-een, rouge on the face o' a woman,—no' exceppin even cork legs, for timmer anes are far better, there bein' nae attempt at deception, which ought never to be practised on ony o' God's reasonable creatures—it's sae insultin.

English Opium-Eater. Better open outrage than hidden guile, which——

Shepherd. Just sae, sir.—But is't no a bonny instrument, that key-bugle? I've been tryin to learn't a' this wunter, beginnin at first wi' the simple coo's-horn. But afore I had weel gotten the gamut, I had nearly lost my life.

Tickler. What? From mere loss of breath—positive exhaustion? An abscess in the lungs, James?

Shepherd. Nothing o' the sort. I hae wund and lungs for onything—even for roarin you doun at argument, whan, driven to the wa', you begin to storm like a Stentor, till the verra neb o' the jug on the dirlin table regards you wi' astonishment, and the speeders are seen rinning alang the ceilin to shelter themselves in their corner cobwebs.—(Canna ye learn frae Mr De Quinshy, man, to speak laigh and lown, trustin mair to sense and less to soun', and you'll find your advantage in't?)—But I allude, sir, to an Adventure.

North. An adventure, James?

Shepherd. Ay—an adventure—but as there's nane o' you for cod's-head and shouthers, I'll first fortify mysel wi' some forty or fifty flakes—like half-crown pieces.

Tickler. Some cod, James, if you please.

Shepherd. Help yoursel—I'm unco thrang[2] the noo. Mr De Quinshy, what fish are you devoorin?

English Opium-Eater. Soles.

Shepherd. And you, Mr North?

North. Salmon.

Shepherd. And you, Mr Tickler?

Tickler. Cod.

Shepherd. You're a' in your laconics. I'm fear'd for the banes, otherwise, after this cod's dune, I sud like gran' to gie that pike a yokin. I ken him for a Linlithgow loun by the length o' his lantern-jaws, and the peacock-neck colour o' his

[1] *Daidlin*—trifling. [2] *Thrang*—busy.

dorsal ridge—and I see by the jut o' his stammach there's store o' stuffin. There 'll be naething between him and me, when the cod's dune for, but halibut and turbot—the first the wershest and maist fushionless o' a' swimmin creturs—and the second ower rich, unless you intend eatin no other specie o' fish.

Tickler. Now—for your adventure—my dear Shepherd.

Shepherd. Whisht—and you'se hear't. I gaed out, ae day, ayont the knowe—the same, Mr North, that kythes [1] aboon the bit field whare I tried, you ken, to raise a conterband crap o' tobacco—and sat doun on a brae amang the brackens—then a' red as the heavens in sunset—tootin awa on the Horn, ettlin first at B flat, and then at A sharp,—when I hears, at the close o' a lesson, what I thocht the grandest echo that ever cam frae a mountain-tap—an echo like a rair o' the ghost of ane o' the Bulls o' Bashan, gane mad amang other horned spectres like himsel in the howe [2] o' the cloudy sky——

English Opium-Eater. Mr North, allow me to direct your attention to that image, which seems to me perfectly original, and, at the same time, perfectly true to nature: Original I am entitled to call it, since I remember nothing resembling it, either essentially or accidentally, in prose or verse, in the literature of Antiquity,—in that of the middle, ordinarily, but ignorantly, called the Dark Ages,—in that which arose in Europe after the revival of letters—though assuredly letters had not sunk into a state from which it could be said with any precision that they did revive,—or in that of our own Times, which seem to me to want that totality and unity which alone constitute an Age, otherwise but a series of unconnected successions, destitute of any causative principle of cohesion or evolvement. True to nature no less am I entitled to call the image, inasmuch as it giveth, not indeed "to airy nothing a local habitation and a name," but to an "airy *something*," namely, the earthly bellowing of an animal, whose bellow is universally felt to be terrific, nay moreover, and therefore, sublime—(for that terror lieth at the root—if not always, yet of verity in by far the greater number of instances—of the true sublime, from early boyhood my intellect saw, and my imagination felt, to be among the great primal intuitive truths of our spiritual frame),—because it giveth, I

[1] *Kythes*—shows itself. [2] *Howe*—hollow.

repeat, to the earthly bellowing of such an animal an aerial character, which, for the moment, deludes the mind into a belief of the existence of a cloudy kine, spectral in the sky-region, else thought to be the dwelling-place of silence and vacuity, and thus an affecting, impressive,—nay, most solemn and almost sacred feeling, is impressed on the sovereign reason of the immortality of the brute creatures,—a doctrine that visits us at those times only when our own being breathes in the awe of divining thought, and, disentangling her wings from all clay encumbrances, is strong in the consciousness of her DEATHLESS ME—so Fichte and Schelling speak——

Shepherd. Weel, sir, you see, doun cam on my "DEATHLESS ME" the Bonassus, head cavin, tail-tuft on high, hinder legs visible ower his neck and shouthers, and his hump clothed in thunder, louder in his ae single sel than a wheeling charge o' a haill regiment o' dragoon cavalry on the Portobello sands,—doun cam the Bonassus, I say, like the Horse Life-Guards takin a park o' French artillery at Waterloo, richt doun, Heaven hae mercy! upon me, his ain kind maister, wha had fed him on turnips, hay, and straw, ever sin' Lammas, till the monster was as fat's he could lie in the hide o' him,—and naething had I to defend mysel wi' but that silly coo's-horn. A' the collies were at hame. Yet in my fricht—deadly as it was—I was thankfu' wee Jamie wasna there lookin for primroses—for he micht hae lost his judgment. You understand, the Bonassus had mista'en my B sharp for anither Bonassus challengin him to single combat.[1]

English Opium-Eater. A very plausible theory.

Shepherd. Thank you, sir, for that commentary on ma text—for it has gien me time to plouter amang the chouks[2] o' the cod. Faith it was nae theory, sir, it was practice—and afore I could fin' my feet, he was sae close upon me that I could see up his nostrils. Just at that moment I remembered that I had on an auld red jacket—the ane that was ance sky-blue, you ken, Mr North, that I had gotten dyed—and that made the Bonassus just an evendoun Bedlamite. For amaist a' horned cattle hate and abhor red coats.

North. So I have heard the army say—alike in town and country.

[1] The naturalisation of the Bonassus in Ettrick is described in Noctes XIV., vol. i. p. 380.

[2] *Chouks*—jaws.

Shepherd. What was to be done? I thocht o' tootin the horn, as the trumpeter did when run aff wi' in the mouth o' a teeger; but then I recollected that it was a' the horn's blame that the Bonassus was there—so I lost nae time in that speculation,—but slipping aff my brecks, jacket, waistcoat, shirt, and a', just as you've seen an actor on the stage, I appeared suddenly before him as naked as the day I was born—and sic is the awe, sir, wi' which a human being, *in puris naturalibus*, inspires the maddest of the brute creation (I had tried it ance before on a mastiff), that he was a' at ance, in a single moment, stricken o' a heap, just the very same as if the butcher had sank the head o' an aix intil his harn-pan—his knees trummled like a new-dropped lamb's—his tail, tuft and a', had nae mair power in't than a broken thrissle-stalk—his een goggled instead o' glowered, a heartfelt difference, I assure you——

English Opium-Eater. It seems to be, Mr Hogg—but you will pardon me if I am mistaken—a distinction without a difference, as the logicians say——

Shepherd. Ay, De Quinshy, ma man—logician as you are, had you stood in my shoon, you had gotten yoursel on baith horns o' the dilemma.

North. Did you cut off his retreat to the Loch, James, and take him prisoner?

Shepherd. I did. Poor silly sumph! I canna help thinkin that he swarfed; though perhaps he was only pretendin—so I mounted him, and, putting my worsted garters through his nose—it had been bored when he was a wild beast in a caravan—I keepit peggin his ribs wi' my heels, till, after gruntin and grainin,[1] and raisin his great big unwieldy red bouk[2] half up frae the earth, and then swelterin doun again, if ance, at least a dizzen times, till I began absolutely to weary o' my situation in life, he feenally recovered his cloots,[3] and, as if inspired wi' a new speerit, aff like lichtnin to the mountains.

North. What!—without a saddle, James? You must have felt the loss—I mean the want, of leather——

Shepherd. We ride a' mainner o' animals bare-backed in the Forest, sir. I hae seen a bairn, no aboon fowre year auld, ridin hame the Bill at the gloamin—a' the kye at his tail, like a squadron o' cavalry ahint Joachim Murat, King o'

[1] *Grainin*—groaning. [2] *Bouk*—bulk. [3] *Cloots*—foot.

Naples.—Mr North, gin ye keep eatin sae vorawciously at the sawmon, you'll hurt yoursel. Fish is heavy. Dinna spare the vinegar, if you will be a glutton.

North. Ma![1]

Shepherd. But, as I was sayin, awa went the Bonassus due west. Though you could hardly ca't even a snaffle, yet I soon found that I had a strong purchase, and bore him doun frae the heights to the turnpike-road that cuts the kintra frae Selkirk to Moffat. There does I encounter three gigfu's o' gentlemen and leddies; and ane o' the latter—a bonny cretur—leuch as if she kent me, as I gaed by at full gallop—and I remembered ha'in seen her afore, though whare I couldna tell; but a' the lave shrieked as if at the visible superstition o' the Water-Kelpie on the Water-Horse mistakin day for nicht, in the delirium o' a fever—and thinkin that it had been the moon shining down on his green pastures aneath the Loch, when it was but the shadow o' a lurid cloud. But I soon vanished into distance.

Tickler. Where the deuce were your clothes all this time, my dear matter-of-fact Shepherd?

Shepherd. Ay—there was the rub. In the enthusiasm of the moment I had forgotten them—nay, such was the state of excitement to which I had worked myself up, that, till I met the three gigfu's o' leddies and gentlemen—a marriage-party—full in the face, I was not, Mr De Quinshy, aware of being so like the Truth. Then I felt, all in a moment, that I was a Mazeppa. But had I turned back, they would have supposed that I had intended to accompany them to Selkirk; and therefore, to allay all such fears, I made a show o' fleein far awa aff into the interior—into the cloudland of Loch Skene and the Grey Mare's Tail.

English Opium-Eater. Your adventure, Mr Hogg, would furnish a much better subject for the painter, or for the poet, than the Mazeppa of Byron. For, it is not possible to avoid feeling, that in the image of a naked man on horseback, there is an involution of the grotesque in the picturesque—of the truly ludicrous in the falsely sublime. But, further, the thought of bonds—whether of cordage or of leather—on a being naturally free, is degrading to the moral, intellectual, and physical dignity of the creature so constricted; and it ought ever to be the

[1] *"Ma!"*—North is too intent upon eating to return an articulate answer.

grand aim of poetry to elevate and exalt. Moreover, Mazeppa, in being subjected to the scornful gaze of hundreds—nay, haply of thousands of spectators—the base retinue of a barbarous power—in a state of uttermost nudity, was subjected to an ordeal of shame and rage, which neither the contemplative nor imaginative mind could brook to see applied to even the veriest outcast scum of our race. He was, in fact, placed naked in a moving pillory—and the hissing shower of scornful curses by which he was by those barbarians assailed, is as insupportable to our thoughts as an irregular volley, or street-firing, of rotten eggs, discharged by the hooting rabble against some miscreant standing with his face through a hole in the wood, with his crime placarded on his felon breast. True, that as Mazeppa "recoils into the wilderness," the exposure is less repulsive to common imagination; but it is not to common imagination that the highest poetry is addressed; and, therefore, though to the fit reader there be indeed some relief or release from shame in the "deserts idle," yet doth not the feeling of degradation so subside as to be merged in that pleasurable state of the soul, essential to the effect of the true and legitimate exercise of poetical power. Shame pursues him faster than the wolves; nor doth the umbrage of the forest-trees, that fly past him in his flight, hide his nakedness, which, in some other conditions, being an attribute of his nature, might even be the source to him and to us of a high emotion, but which here being forcibly and violently imposed against his will by the will of a brutal tyrant, is but an accident of his position in space and time, and therefore unfit to be permanently contemplated in a creature let loose before the Imaginative Faculty. Nor is this vital vice—so let me call it—in anywise cured or alleviated by his subsequent triumph, when he returns—as he himself tells us he did—at the head of "twice ten thousand horse!"—for the contrast only serves to deepen and darken the original nudity of his intolerable doom. The mother-naked man still seems to be riding in front of all his cavalry; nor, in this case, has the poet's art sufficed to reinstate him in his pristine dignity, and to efface all remembrance of the degrading process of stripping and of binding, to which of yore the miserable Nude had been compelled to yield, as helpless as an angry child ignominiously whipt by a nurse, till its mental sufferings may be said to be lost in its

physical agonies. Think not that I wish to withhold from Byron the praise of considerable spirit and vigour of execution, in his narrative of the race; but that praise may duly belong to very inferior powers; and I am now speaking of Mazeppa in the light of a great Poem. A great Poem it assuredly is not; and how small a Poem it assuredly is, must be felt by all who have read, and are worthy to read, Homer's description of the dragging, and driving, and whirling of the dead body of Hector in bloody nakedness behind the chariot-wheels of Achilles.

Shepherd. I never heard onything like that in a' my days. Weel, then, sir, there were nae wolves to chase me and the Bonassus, nor yet mony trees to overshadow us; but we made the cattle and the sheep look about them, and mair nor ae hooded craw and lang-necked heron gat a fricht, as we came suddenly on him through the mist, and gaed thundering by the cataracts. In an hour or twa I began to get as firm on my seat as a Centaur; and discovered by the chasms that the Bonassus was not only as fleet as a racer, but that he could loup like a hunter, and thocht nae mair o' a thirty feet spang than ye wad think o' stepping across the gutter. Ma faith, we wereua lang o' bein' in Moffat!

English Opium-Eater. In your Flight, Mr Hogg, there were visibly and audibly concentrated all the attributes of the highest Poetry. First, freedom of the will; for self-impelled you ascended the animal. Secondly, the impulse, though immediately consequent upon, and proceeding from, one of fear, was yet an impulse of courage; and courage is not only a virtue, and acknowledged to be such in all Christian countries, but among the Romans—who assuredly, however low they must be ranked on the intellectual scale, were nevertheless morally a brave people—to it alone was given the name *virtus*. Thirdly, though you were during your whole flight so far passive as that you yielded to the volition of the creature, yet were you likewise, during your whole course, so far active, that you *guided*, as it appears, the motions, which it was beyond your power entirely to control; thus vindicating in your own person the rights of the superior order of creation. Fourthly, you were not so subjugated by the passion peculiar and appropriate to your situation, as to be insensible to or regardless of the courtesies, the amenities, and the humanities of civilised life—

as witness that glance of mutual recognition that passed, in one moment, between you and the "bonny creature" in the gig; nor yet to be inattentive to the effect produced by yourself and the Bonassus on various tribes of the inferior creatures,—cattle, sheep, crows, and herons, to say nothing of the poetical delight experienced by you from the influence of the beautiful or august shows of nature,—mists, clouds, cataracts, and the eternal mountains. Fifthly, the constantly accompanying sense of danger interfused with that of safety, so as to constitute one complex emotion, under which, hurried as you were, it may be said with perfect truth that you found leisure to admire, nay, even to wonder at, the strange speed of that most extraordinary animal—and most extraordinary he must be, if the only living representative of his species since the days of Aristotle,—nor less to admire and wonder at your own skill, equally, if not more, miraculous, and well entitled to throw into the shade of oblivion the art of the most illustrious equestrian that ever "witched the world with noble horsemanship." Sixthly, the sublime feeling of penetrating, like a thunderbolt, cloud-land and all the mist cities that evanished as you galloped into their suburbs, gradually giving way to a feeling no less sublime, of having left behind all those unsubstantial phantom-regions, and of nearing the habitation or tabernacle of men, known by the name of Moffat—perhaps one of the most imaginative of all the successive series of states of your soul since first you appeared among the hills, like Sol entering Taurus. And, finally, the deep trance of home-felt delight that must have fallen upon your spirit—true still to all the sweetest and most sacred of all the social affections—when, the Grey Mare's Tail left streaming far behind that of the Bonassus, you knew from the murmur of that silver stream that your flight was about to cease—till, lo! the pretty village of which you spoke, embosomed in hills and trees—the sign of the White Lion, peradventure, motionless in the airless calm—a snug parlour with a blazing ingle—re-apparelling instant, almost as thought—food both for man and beast—for the Ettrick Shepherd—pardon my familiarity for sake of friendship—and his Bonassus. Yea, from goal to goal, the entire Flight is Poetry, and the original idea of nakedness is lost—or say rather veiled—in the halo-light of imagination.

Shepherd. Weel, if it's no provokin, Mr De Quinshy, to hear

you, who never was on a Bonassus a' your days, analeezin, wi' the maist comprehensive and acute philosophical accuracy, ma complex emotion during the Flight to Moffat far better than I could do mysel——

North. Your genius, James, is synthetical.

Shepherd. Synthetical? I howp no—at least nae mair sae than the genius o' Burns or Allan Kinninghame—or the lave—for——

English Opium-Eater. What is the precise Era of the Flight to Moffat?

Shepherd. Mr De Quinshy, you're like a' ither great philosophers, ane o' the maist credulous o' mankind! You wad believe me, were I to say that I had ridden a whale up the Yarrow frae Newark to Eltrive! The haill story's a lee! and sae free o' ony foundation in truth, that I wad hae nae objections to tak my bible-oath that sic a beast as a Bonassus never was creawted—and it's lucky for him that he never was, for seeing that he's said to consume three bushel o' ingans to denner every day o' his life, Noah wad never hae letten him intil the Ark, and he wad hae been fund, after the subsidin o' the waters, a skeleton on the tap o' Mount Ararat.

English Opium-Eater. His non-existence in nature is altogether distinct from his existence in the imagination of the poet—and, in good truth, redounds to his honour—for his character must be viewed in the light of a pure *Ens rationis*—or say rather——

Shepherd. Just let him be an *Ens rationis*. But confess, at the same time, that you was bammed, sir.

English Opium-Eater. I recognise the legitimate colloquial use of the word *Bam*, Mr Hogg, denoting, I believe, "the willing surrendering of belief, one of the first principles of our mental constitution, to any statement made with apparent sincerity, but real deceit, by a mind not previously suspected to exist in a perpetual atmosphere of falsehood."

Shepherd. Just sae, sir,—that's a *Bam*. In Glasgow, they ca't a ggeg.—But what's the matter wi' Mr North? Saw ye ever the cretur lookin sae gash?[1] I wish he mayna be in a fit o' apoplexy. Speak till him, Mr De Quinshy.

English Opium-Eater. His countenance is, indeed, ominously sable,—but 'tis most unlikely that apoplexy should strike a

[1] *Gash*—sagacious: here in the sense of "solemn."

person of his spare habit: Nay, I must sit corrected; for I believe that attacks of this kind have, within the last quarter of a century, become comparatively frequent, and constitute one of the not least perplexing phenomena submitted to the inquisition of Modern Medical Science.—Mr North, will you relieve our anxiety?

Shepherd (*starting up, and flying to Mr North*). His face is a' purple. Confoun' that cravat!—for the mair you pu' at it, the tichter it grows.

English Opium-Eater. Mr Hogg, I would seriously and earnestly recommend more delicacy and gentleness.

Shepherd. Tuts. It's fastened, I declare, ahint wi' a gold buckle,—and afore wi' a gold preen,—a brotch frae Mrs Gentle, in the shape o' a bleedin heart! 'Twill be the death o' him.—Oh! puir fallow, puir fallow!—rax[1] me ower that knife. What's this? You've given me the silver fish-knife, Mr De Quinshy. Na,—that's far waur, Mr Tickler—That swurd for carvin the round. But here's my ain jockteleg.[2]

[SHEPHERD *unclasps his pocket-knife,—and while brandishing it in great trepidation,* MR NORTH *opens his eyes.*

North. Emond! Emond! Emond!—Thurtell—Thurtell—Thurtell![3]

Shepherd. A drap o' bluid's on his brain,—and Reason becomes Raving! What's man?

Tickler. Cut away, James. Not a moment to be lost. Be firm and decided, else he is a dead heathen.

Shepherd. Wae's me,—wae's me! Nae goshawk ever sae glowered,—and only look at his puir fingers hoo they are workin! I canna thole the sicht,—I'm as weak's a wean,—and fear that I'm gaun to fent. Tak the knife, Tickler. O, look at his hauns,—look at his hauns!

Tickler (*bending over Mr North*). Yes, yes, my dear sir,—I comprehend you—I——

Shepherd (*in anger and astonishment*). Mr Tickler, are you mad?—fingerin your fingers in that gate,—as if you were mockin him!

[1] *Rax*—reach.

[2] *Jockteleg*—a folding-knife.

[3] For Thurtell, see *ante*, vol. i. p. 81. Robert Emond was tried in Edinburgh on the 8th of February, and executed on the 17th of March 1830, for the murder of Katherine Franks and her daughter Madoline, in their house at Abbey, near Haddington.

English Opium-Eater. They are conversing, Mr Hogg, in that language which originated in Oriental——

Shepherd. Oh! they're speakin on their fingers?—then a's richt,—and Mr North's comin roun' again intil his seven senses. It's been but a dwawm!

Tickler. Mr North has just contrived to communicate to me, gentlemen, the somewhat alarming intelligence, that the back-bone of the pike has for some time past been sticking about half-way down his throat; that, being unwilling to interrupt the conviviality of the company, he endeavoured at first to conceal the circumstance, and then made the most strenuous efforts to dislodge it, upwards or downwards, without avail; but that you must not allow yourselves to fall into any extravagant consternation, as he indulges the fond hope that it may be extracted, even without professional assistance, by Mr De Quincey, who has an exceedingly neat small Byronish hand, and on whose decision of character he places the most unfaltering reliance.

Shepherd (*in a huff*). Does he?—Very weel—sin' he forgets auld freens—let him do sae——

North. Ohrr Hogrwhu—chru—u—u—u—Hogruwhuu——

Shepherd. Na! I canna resist sic pleadin eloquence as that—here's the screw, let me try it—Or, what think ye, Mr Tickler,—what think ye, Mr De Quinshy—o' thir pair o' boot-hooks?—Gin I could get a cleek o' the bane by ane o' the vertebræ, I might hoise it gently up, by slaw degrees, sae that ane could get at it wi' their fingers, and then pu' it out o' his mouth in a twinklin! But first let me look doun his throat—Open your mouth, my dearest sir.

[Mr North *leans back his head, and opens his mouth.*

Shepherd. I see't like a harrow. Rin ben, baith o' ye, for Mr Awmrose. [Tickler *and* Mr De Quincey *obey.*

Weel ackit, sir—weel ackit—I was taen in mysel at first, for your cheeks were like coals. Here's the back-bane o' the pike on the trencher—I'll——

(*Re-enter* Tickler *and* Opium-Eater, *with* Mr Ambrose, *pale as death.*)

It's all over, gentlemen—It's all over!

Ambrose. Oh! oh! oh! [*Faints away into* Tickler's *arms.*

Shepherd. What the deevil's the matter wi' you, you set o' fules?—I've gotten out the bane.—Look here at the skeleton o' the shark!

English Opium-Eater. Monstrous!

North (*running to the assistance of* Mr Ambrose). We have sported too far, I fear, with his sensibilities.

English Opium-Eater. A similar case of a fish-bone in Germany——

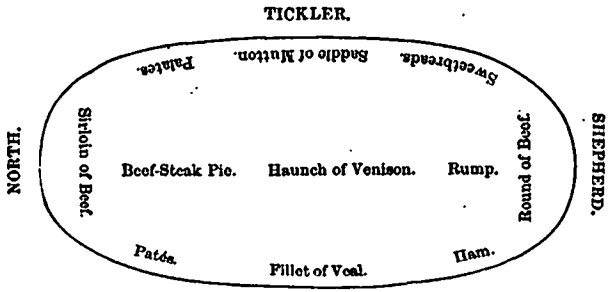
Shepherd. Mr De Quinshy, can you really swallow *that?*

[*Looking at the pike-back, about two feet long.*

But the hour has nearly expired.

[*The* Leanders *play "Hey, Johnnie Cope, are you wauken yet?"*—Mr Ambrose *starts to his feet, runs off, and reappears almost instanter at the head of the forces.*

THIRD COURSE—FLESH.



Shepherd (*in continuation*). And do you really think, Mr North, that the kintra's in great and general distress, and a' orders in a state o' absolute starvation?

North. Yes—James—although the Duke[1] cannot see the sufferings of his subjects, I can—and——

Shepherd. Certain appearances do indicate national distress; yet I think I could, withouten meikle difficulty, lay my haun the noo on ithers that seem to lead to a different conclusion.

North. No sophistry, James. True, that we are now sitting at a Feast. But remember, James, that All Fool's Day has been duly celebrated by us ever since the commencement of our career, and that one omission of observance of such anniversary might prove fatal to the existence of "The Magazine."

[1] The Duke of Wellington. He was at this time Prime Minister.

Shepherd. At least ominous. For sure aneuch it would be ungratefu' to forget our subscribers.

North. And are we to violate a sacred custom, merely because the country has been brought by an incapable and unprincipled ministry to the brink of ruin?

English Opium-Eater. Yet I have seen nothing in the condition of the people to incline me to doubt the truth of the doctrine—originally stated by Say, afterwards expounded by Ricardo—and, since the death of that illustrious discoverer—(happier than Cooke, who by twice circumnavigating the globe—for on his third voyage he was cut off by the savage Sandwichers, the problem unsolved—ascertained the non-existence of Terra Incognita Australis;—yea, more felicitous even than Columbus, who, while he indeed found a new world, mistook it for an old one, and dreamt that he beheld isles that of old had been visited for their golden store by the ships of Solomon;)—I say, since the death of David Ricardo unmercifully and laboriously overloaded with a heap of leaden words that love the ground, by Smith and M'Culloch [whose pages are the most arid spots in that desert of Politico-Economical science which the genius of the Jew[1] mapped out, indicating the direction in which all the main caravan roads ought to run by the banks of the rivers, by the wells, and by the oases]—that doctrine which, being established by arguments *a priori*, would indeed remain in my reason immutable as an axiom in the mathematics, in spite of all the seeming opposition of mere outward facts, or phenomena from which the blind leading the blind, owl-like in mid-day, would seek to draw conclusions at vital enmity with those primal truths subsisting effectually and necessarily in the Relations of Things;—[which relations indeed they are, shadowed or figured out to ordinary apprehension under various names:]—the Doctrine, in short, that Production is the Cause of Production, that Vents create Vents, and thence, that a universal Glut is a Moral and Physical Impossibility, the monster of a sick merchant's dream.[2]

Shepherd. That Vents creawte Vents! Do you mean, in plain

[1] Ricardo was a Jew, or of Jewish extraction.

[2] Gluts are caused, not by the over-production of any commodity, but by the under-production of other commodities, with which the apparently, though not really, superabundant article might be exchanged.

language, Mr De Quinshy, to say that lums[1] creawte lums—that ae chimley procreawtes anither chimley——

North. My dear James, you know nothing of Political Economy—so hold your——

Shepherd. Heaven be praised—for a' them that pretends they do—I mean the farmers—aye break. I ken ae puir fallow, a cock-laird,[2] wi' a pleasant mailin[3] o' his ain, that had been in the family since Seth, that got his death by studyin the Stot.[4] "Stimulate Production! Stimulate Production!" was aye puir Watty's cry—"Nae fear o' consumption. The *nati consumere fruges*"—(for the Stot had taught him to quote some rare lines o' Latin)—"will aye be hungry and thirsty, and need to wear claes;"—but Watty drave baith his pigs and his sheep to a laigh market; he fand that the Stot was likewise far wrang in tellin him that competition couldna possibly reduce profits—an apothegm you would hae thocht aforehaun that wud hae scunnered a natural-born idiot,—yet still wad Watty study the Stot—for he was a dour cretur—till ae nicht, ridin hame frae Selkirk, wi' M'Culloch's *Principles* in the richt-haun pouch o' his big-coat, he was, as you micht easily hae conjectured, thrawn aff his balance, and coupin ower till that side, was dragged wi' his fit in the stirrup till he was as dead as the Stot's ain doctrine about Absentees.[5]

North. Besides, gentlemen, remember that our board to-day is chiefly supplied by presents, among which are many love-gifts from the fair——

Shepherd. And then, The Fragments——

North. The *Reliquiæ Danaum*——

Shepherd. Are the property o' the puir——

North. And will all be distributed to-morrow—by ticket—according to the arrangement of Mrs Gentle——

Shepherd. The maist charitable o' God's creturs—exceptin yoursel, my dear sir—whose haun is open as day——Oh, man! but there's a heap o' hatefu' meanin in the epithet, *close-fisted!* I like aye to see the open paum, for it's amaist as expressive's the open broo. A greedy chiel—him that's

[1] *Lums*—chimneys. [2] *Cock-laird*—yeoman.

[3] *Mailin*—farm. [4] See *ante*, vol. i., p. 140, note.

[5] This doctrine was, that the non-residence of the Irish proprietors could not injure the general prosperity of Ireland; a position questionable, to say the least, on grounds of political economy, and certainly indefensible on moral grounds.

ony way mecserly—aye sits, you'll observe, wi' his nieves crunkled up unconsciously through the power o' habit, or keeps them in the pockets o' his breeks as if fumblin amang the fardens; and let the conversation be about what it wull, there's aye a sort o' mental reservation in his een, seemin to say, that if the talk should tak a turn, and ony hint be drapt about a subscription to a droon'd fisherman's widow and weans, or the like, he'll instantly thraw cauld water on't, suggest inquiries intil her character, and ring the bell for his hack. North, look at thae twa creturs guttlin—the tane at the saiddle, and the tither at the fillet!—Awmrose, change the position o' the fowre principal dishes answerin to the Fowre Airts.[1]

[AMBROSE *makes the saddle exchange places with the fillet, the sirloin with the round.*

By this dispensation, each o' us gets easy access, feenally, to a' the dishes, sereawtim;[2] can carve in his ain way, and taks his fair chance o' the tidbits; — but d'ye ken, sirs, that I'm gettin melancholy—fa'in into laigh spirits—weary o' life. I howp it's but the reaction frae that daffin—but really the verra skies seem to my een as if I were lookin up to them, lyin on my back aneath a muddy stream—while, as for this globe, it's naething but glaur! The poetry o' life is dead and buried, sir, and wha can bear to be wadin frae mornin till nicht, up to his oxters, in prose? The verra Deevil[3] himsel's got dull in the hauns o' that Rab Montgomery,—cauldrifed, as if hell were out o' coals,—a' its blast-furnaces choked up wi' blue silent ashes—and the damned coorin and chitterin in corners, as if fire were frost.

North. James! James!

Shepherd. Dinna be feared for me being blasphemous. Rather than sin sae, micht I cease to breathe, or gang sichin and sabbin in insanity through the woods and moors! The Deevil's just as utter a nonentity as ony ither dream; or if no, at the maist, he's but a soap-bubble. Mind ye, I'm speakin o' an external Deevil—a shaped Satan—a limbed

[1] *Airts*—points of the compass.

[2] *Sereawtim*—seriatim.

[3] *Satan:* a poem by the Rev. Robert Montgomery, now (1855) the excellent minister of Percy Chapel, London. At this time he was a student at Oxford, and not much beyond his teens.

Lucifer—Beelzebub wi' a belly—gaun bodily about, wi' cloots and horns, seeking whom he may devour.

North. The saving superstition of the imagination.

Shepherd. Just sae — shadows seen by sin movin atween and the sky in the gloamin, when naebody's near, but some glowerin and listenin auld motionless tower — shadows o' its ain thochts, at which it aften gangs demented—nor will they subside awa intil naething, but, unsubstantial as they are, far mair endurable than substance—just as ghosts continue to glide about for centuries after the bodies have amaist ceased to be even banes, and haunt a' the hills and glens, sunshine and moonlight alike, lown[1] or stormy days;—nor unprivileged are they by conscience to enter—just as if a thunder-cloud were passin the skylight windows — into the house o' God—still by the side o' the sinner, even on the Sabbath — and keepin fixed on his their dismal een, they can frichten the immortal spirit within him, sae that his ears nae mair transmit to it the singin o' the psalm—unless you ca' that singin, which is mair like the noise o' ever sae mony swarms o' bees a' castin thegither on a het day on the same sycamore, and murderin ane anither in the confusion o' queens by haill hives, till the winged air is in torment, and a' the grun' aneath crawlin wi' wrathfu' mutilation!

North. Pollok was a true poet — and the *Course of Time*, though not a poem, overflows with poetry; but the apes of that angel must be bagged, and stifled in the cess-pools of the cities where they——

Shepherd. Suppose we begin wi' the Embro' apes. There's that cretur——

North. Let him stand over for a season—one other chatter —and he dies.

Shepherd. I could greet—I hae grat[2]—to think o' puir Pollok ha'in been ca'd sae sune awa — but his country may be said to hae bigged a monument ower his remains.

North. Poor Blanco White's[3] *London Review*—got up among some of the most formal of the Oxford prigs—for Whately[4] surely could never countenance such a concern — the only

[1] *Lown*—calm.

[2] *Grat*—wept.

[3] After undergoing many vicissitudes of religious opinion, Blanco White, originally a Spanish papist, ended as a Unitarian, and died at Liverpool in 1841.

[4] Afterwards the Archbishop of Dublin.

number that ever got printed ordered the world to despise Pollok. The *Course of Time*—Miltonic in design and execution—was tried by the Oriel critic as a prize poem——

Shepherd. I recolleck, sir. Yon Number 's used at Mount Benger still, as a stane weight——

North. Each paltry periodical, James, that, born of poorest parents, and fed from the first, as paupers' brats must be, on pap provided by charity, begins soon as it is dropped, drab-and-ditch-delivered, instinctively to caterwaul after the fashion of its progenitors, like a nest o' kittens, snoking[1] about the straw with their little red snub-noses, and sealed swollen eyes, which are plainly doomed never to see the day, except perhaps one single blink on the morning they are all plopped pitilessly into a pond, to be fished out and flung in again, every spring-Saturday, by schoolboys learning the elements of angling——Each paltry periodical, James, weekly, monthly, or quarterly—while like a puddle in a cart-wheel rut, it attempts to reflect the physiognomy of Christopher North—employs the very first moments of its transitory existence in showing its gums—for time is not given it for teeth—at ME—at US—at the MAGAZINE—who would not even take the trouble of treating it as a Newfoundland dog has been sometimes seen to treat a troublesome turnspit.

Shepherd. Out they gang, ane after the ither, like sae mony farden candles stickin intil turnips—and och! what a shabby stink! Ae single sneer frae you, sir, smeeks[2] and smithers them in their ain reek;[3] and yet, sic is the spite o' stupidity, that ae fule taks nae warnin frae the fate o' the fule afore him, but they are a' like sae mony sheep, jumpin o' their ain accord into the verra shambles—although the Shepherd—that's me—does a' he can wi' his collies to keep them out o' the jaws o' destruction, and get them a' safely collected in ae staring squad on the common, whare they may feed on herbage little or nane the waur for the goose-dung. Hoo's the *Embro' Review* gaun on?

North. Very well indeed, James. Methinks, under the new editor,[4] it hath more pith and smeddum.

[1] *Snoking*—nuzzling. [2] *Smeeks*—stifles with smoke. [3] *Reek*—smoke.

[4] Mr Macvey Napier, editor of the *Encyclopædia Brittanica* (seventh edition), and Professor of Conveyancing in the University of Edinburgh. He succeeded Jeffrey in the editorship of the *Edinburgh Review* in 1829, and died in 1847.

Shepherd. O' late years it has aye reminded me o' an auld worn-out ram, whom the proprietor doesna like either to let dee o' hunger, or a' at ance to pit out o' its meesery—but sin' he's of nae use noo, and wunna sell either for woo or meat, the master flings him noo and then a turnip, and noo and then alloos him a wusp o' strae—as he stauns wi' his tauty sides, speeral horns, and beard that has never been shaven in the memory o' man — the Eemage rather than the Reality o' a Ram.

North. Why, James, the youth of the animal seems in some measure restored, and he butts away with much animation and——

Shepherd. Let him tak tent he doesna break his horns. Them that's beginnin to bud's tender, but them that's dune wi' growin's frush: I hae nae faith in the renewal o' youth; and though the Ram, *videlicet* the Review, may be better fed noo than for some wunters by-past — puir beast!—yet he can only be patched up. Ye may aiblins fatten his sides—but I'll defy you to harden his horns. Wash him in the Sky-blue[1] Pool, but still wull his woo be like a specie o' hair on some outlandish dowg; and as for continuin his——

North. Southey's *Colloquies* are, in the opinion of young Macaulay, exceedingly contemptible——

Shepherd. And wha's Macaulay?[2]

North. The son of old Macaulay.

Shepherd. And wha the deevil's auld Macaulay?

North. Zachary.[3]

Shepherd. What? The Sierra Leone Saint, who has been the means o' sending sae mony sinners to Satan through that accursed settlement?

North. The same—whom our friend M'Queen[4] has squabashed—and whom that able and accomplished man, Charles M'Kenzie, late consul-general at Hayti——

[1] The cover of the *Edinburgh Review* is blue and yellow.

[2] This question is sufficiently answered *now*.

[3] Zachary Macaulay, the historian's father, was a West India merchant. He was a friend of Wilberforce, and in his religious opinions he adhered to what has been termed the "Clapham sect."

[4] James M'Queen advocated opinions directly opposed to those of Macaulay and Wilberforce on West India politics. He is also distinguished for his geographical researches, the results of which appeared in various numbers of *Blackwood's Magazine;* and he has been for long an able member of the London Conservative press.

Shepherd, Charles M'Kenzie! I see his *Notes on Hayti* advertised by Colburn. I'll warrant they'll be gude—for I remember him lang ago, a medical student at the College here, afore he turned himsel to mercantile affairs, and a cleverer young man wasna in a' Embro'.

North. He is about to be sent out by Government to Cuba—one of the judges to inquire——

Shepherd. I'm glad to hear't—I howp noo he'll send me hame some rum and limes—wi' a hogshead o' sugar——

North. But, James, as I was saying, Thomas Macaulay informs his fellow-creatures that Robert Southey's mind is "utterly destitute of the power of discerning truth from falsehood."

Shepherd. Then Thomas Macaulay is naither mair nor less than an impertinent puppy for his pains; and Maga should lay him across her knee, doun wi' his breeks, and haun ower head wi' the taws[1] on his doup, like Dominie Skelp——

North. He adds, "Mr Southey brings to the task two faculties which were never, we believe, vouchsafed in measure so copious to any human being,—the faculty of believing without a reason, and the faculty of hating without a provocation;" and again, "in the mind of Mr Southey, reason has no place at all, as either leader or follower, as either sovereign or slave."

Shepherd. I wonner, sir, hoo you can remember sic malignant trash. An' these are the symptoms, sir, are they, that the youth o' the auld Ram is renewed?

North. No doubt seems to have entered the mind of the young gentleman, that, while in fact he was merely attempting, without much point, to stick a pin into the calf of one of Mr Southey's literary legs, he was planting a dagger in the brain of the Laureate.

Shepherd. A Liliputian atween the spauls[2] o' Gulliver. Yet one canna but admire the courage o' the cretur in the inverse ratio o' its impotence. Only suppose Soothey to stir in his sleep—but to gie a sneeze or a snore—and hoo the bit barrister—for I remember what the bit body is noo—would wriggle awa like a worm, and divin intil some dung, hide himsel amang the grubs.

North. He's a clever lad, James——

[1] *Taws*—the terror of Scotch schoolboys. [2] *Spauls*—shoulder-blades.

Shepherd. Evidently, and a clever lad he'll remain, depend ye upon that, a' the days o' his life. A clever lad o' thirty year auld and some odds, is to ma mind the maist melancholy sicht in nature—only think o' a clever lad o' threescore-and-ten on his death-bed, wha can look back on nae greater achievement than ha'in ance—or aiblins ten times—abused Mr Soothey in the *Embro' Review!*

North. The son of the Saint, who seems himself to be something of a reviewer, is insidious as a serpent, but fangless as the slow-worm.

Shepherd. That's the hag or blind-worm?

North. The same. He pretends to admire Mr Southey's poetry, that with its richness he may contrast the poverty of his prose. "His larger poems," quoth he, "though *full of faults*, are nevertheless extraordinary productions. We doubt greatly *whether they will be read fifty years* hence—but that *if they are read*, they will be admired, we have no doubt whatever." As for his short poems, "they are not generally happy;" and "his odes are for the most part worse than Pye's, and as bad as Cibber's."

Shepherd. Puir deevil! hoo envious thochts maun hae been eatin awa at his heart like mites in a rotten cheese!

North. All Mr Southey's heroes—says the Templar—"make love either like seraphim or cattle." "No man out of a cloister ever wrote about love so coldly, and at the same time so grossly."

Shepherd. A' the young leddies in Britain ken that to be a lee—and the cross-bred puppy o' a mongrel-cur wadna hesitate to ca' themselves[1] limmers, after speakin o' the coldness and grossness of the love of Thalaba for Oneiza his Arabian Maid, whether breathed in delight in their tent beneath the palm-tree's shade, or groaned in madness amid the tombs, after Azrael the angel of death had left their bridal chamber. What does he mean by cattle?

North. Obscene insolence!

Shepherd. Trash like that, sir, wad damn at ance ony new periodical. Tak ma word for't, sir, the auld Ram 'ill no leeve lang on sic articles o' consumption. He'll tak the rot, and dee a' ae scab, ae carbuncle, "a perfect chrysolite."

North. I had some thoughts of exposing the gross mis-

[1] *Themselves—i. e.*, "all the young ladies in Britain."

representations — say the falsehoods — of this article — but——

Shepherd. 'Tweel it's no worth your while. The weed's withered, I'se warrant, by this time, though no a month auld —while the flowers o' Mr Southey's genius, rich and rare, bright and balmy, will breathe and bloom as lang's the sun shines on the earth, and the Seasons keep rinnin, alternately, unwearied alangside o' his chariot wheels. Mr De Quinshy, what for dinna ye speak?

English Opium-Eater. Mr Southey is, beyond all doubt, one of the most illustrious, just as Mr Macaulay is one of the most obscure men, of the age. The abuse lavished upon him in that contemptible critique on his *Colloquies*—a critique which I have read, and therefore must correct the statement I made about the middle of the last Course, that I had not seen any number of the *Edinburgh Review* since that for April 1826—is baser than I could have expected even from a Macaulay—meaning thereby any Sinner among the Saints,—and I do not doubt, Mr Hogg, to use your own amusing image, that it will sicken, if not poison to death, the old Ram—the ancient Aries—a sign into which the sun never enters——

Shepherd. That's wutty—I'm a sure judge o' wut—that's watty!

Tickler (*aside to the Shepherd*). But so-so—I prefer our admirable friend's logic to his——

Shepherd (*aside to Tickler*). Na, na—I canna thole his logic.

English Opium-Eater. But while I reprobate the insolent spirit in which this obscure cipher has chosen to speak of such a good and great man, let it be understood that I not only withhold my sympathy from some of the sentiments expressed by Mr Southey in his *Colloquies*, but censure them as most erroneous, and most unjust—as, for example, all that he has falsely and foolishly said, in that and other works, respecting the periodical literature of this age. What right had Mr Southey, who gains an honourable livelihood chiefly by his contributions to Reviews, to put into the mouth of Sir Thomas More the following insulting sentence—insulting to many minds of the same order with his own, and as devoted to the truth,—"The waters in which you have now been angling have been shallow enough, if the pamphlet in your hand is, as it appears to be, a Magazine." Nor is his answer to the Ghost

more courteous to his contemporaries,—"In publications of this kind, prejudicial as they are to public taste and public feeling, and therefore deeply injurious to the real interests of literature, something may sometimes be found to compensate for the trash, and tinsel, and insolent flippancy, which are now become the staple commodities of such journals."

Shepherd. Hut—tut, Mr Soothey; you shouldna hae said that, sir,—for it's no tr——.

English Opium-Eater. In the first place, Mr Southey ought to have given the name of the pamphlet—that is, the Magazine—from which he chose to extract Kant's Idea of a Universal History on a Cosmopolitical plan. Secondly, he ought to have printed that extract as an extract from that Magazine, and not to have attempted—rather unsuccessfully—to incorporate its substance with his own work. Thirdly, he ought to have given the name of the translator, not unknown to him, when he scrupled not to enrich his *Colloquies* with some of Kant's thoughts, in the original to him inaccessible, as Mr Southey's knowledge of the language of Germany does not embrace the nomenclature of any of its philosophical schools or sects. Fourthly, to insult publicly the character of all Magazines—that included from which you are at the same time pilfering a jewel (Mr Southey will—nay, must—ponder the word "pilfer"), is inconsistent with the common courtesies of life, and unworthy of a scholar and gentleman. Fifthly, the Magazine from which Mr Southey makes that extract (which I may mention was translated by me) was the *London Magazine*, published by Taylor and Hessey, and originally under the editorship of John Scott. Its chief supporters were Charles Lamb, William Hazlitt, Allan Cunningham, Thomas Hood, Reynolds, the most amiable and ingenuous Aytoun,[1] whose beautiful and original Papers were afterwards collected, and published in two volumes, and—let me not assume the semblance of that paltry humility which I despise—myself; and how dared Mr Southey to assert, that of any journal so supported, tinsel, trash, and insolent flippancy, were the staple commodities?

Shepherd. I couldna love as weel as admire ony man, how-

[1] This Aytoun was, of course, *not* the accomplished author of the *Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers*, but another—"a clever essayist," according to the American editor.

ever great and good, and Mr Soothey's baith, and has aye been generous to my genius, gin he hadna his wee bit weaknesses like ither folk,—sae on the whole I'm glad that he has been sae far left to himsel as to sneer at a' the Magazines, and insult, in a lump, a' their editors, contributors, and subscribers, comprehending, I guess, nine-tenths o' the nation.

English Opium-Eater. Neither shall a spurious delicacy deter me from declaring, even here, that there is more wit, and more wisdom, in the Periodical over which, Mr North, you preside, and to which there are now present two of the most distinguished contributors——

Shepherd. Say three, sir—say three, Mr De Quinshy—for when you do write—pity it's sae seldom—ye bang us a'——

English Opium-Eater. Than in an equal number of any other miscellaneous volumes, the product of this or the preceding century, not excepting on the list all the best of Mr Southey's own, full as they are of wit and wisdom, and placing him deservedly in the first rank of our literature. Tinsel there may be, but it lies lightly over bars of the beaten gold; he must have an instinct for trash who can detect it among the necessaries and luxuries of life, that are monthly distributed to all classes, with most lavish, even prodigal profusion, from that inexhaustible Magazine; and as for insolent flippancy, that cannot be said, without senseless and blindfolded injustice, to be the staple commodity of a Periodical, of which one of the chief claims has long lain in those myriad-minded Dialogues, whose facete benignities, cordialities, and humanities, form a continued era in the philosophy of human life. Need I name, unworthy member as I am of this meeting—the Noctes Ambrosianæ!

Omnes. Hurra—hurra—hurra!

Shepherd. Gie me an unce o' opium, Mr De Quinshy——

English Opium-Eater (*filling up drops of laudanum in the minimeter to* 120). I give you a small dose to begin with, Mr Hogg——

Shepherd. Na, na—I was but jokin—I'm ower auld to begin on the poppy, I'se e'en keep to the maut.

English Opium-Eater. To recur, for a brief space, to the article on Mr Southey in the *Edinburgh Review.* The editor, who, I am told, is an able and judicious man, ought not to have admitted it at this juncture, or crisis, into his work. Mr

Jeffrey and Mr Southey were open and avowed foes, Mr Jeffrey having been, beyond all question, the aggressor. The interest of the war was at an end, when that accomplished champion quitted the field; and the public is not prepared to regard, with any satisfaction, the renewal of the attack on Mr Southey, by a combatant whose shield bears no impress of any high emprise. He is, after all, but a mere skirmisher, and could not abide the onset of a man-at-arms.

North. The editor should at least have assured himself, by a perusal of the *Colloquies*, that the young man's critique, as it is called, contained no such wilful misrepresentations as would disgrace a gentleman in the intercourse of private life.

English Opium-Eater. Yet several such there are—gross misstatements of facts—to say nothing of the spirit of misinterpretation that pervades the whole article—like envenomed blood, circulated through a body bloated and discoloured by some rank disease. The mention of one will suffice; and, if not dead to shame, let the face of the reviewer blush brass, while he hangs down his head.

North. The volumes are in the saloon-library. I will get them for you in a moment.

[*Mr* North *takes down the "Colloquies" from the shelf Cæsar.*

English Opium-Eater. Beautifully bound!—By what artist?

North. By Henderson.

English Opium-Eater. Now, I will make a complete exposure of this prig—who, in seeking to render Mr Southey ridiculous, has made himself hateful.

Shepherd. Here's your health, sir, again, in a caulker.—Let's hear 't.

English Opium-Eater. In the Colloquy entitled Walla-Crag, Sir Thomas More, having said that the progress of the useful arts, and the application of science to the purposes of common life, warrant the expectation that whenever a state shall duly exercise its parental duties, there will be no trades which shall either hebetate the faculties or harden the heart,——

Shepherd. That, I fear, 's Utopian.

English Opium-Eater. Not the less characteristic, on that account, Mr Hogg, of Sir Thomas More.

Shepherd. Eh?

English Opium-Eater. Montesinos — the name Mr Southey adopts in these *Colloquies* — says, "Butchers will continue," —and then adds, "I cannot but acknowledge, with good John Fox, that the sight of a slaughter-house or shambles, if it does not disturb this clear conviction "(he is alluding to the mercifulness of cutting off suddenly and violently the existence of animals, who thus suffer less than those who die of disease or inanition), "excites in me uneasiness and pain, as well as loathing."

Shepherd. Natural enough, surely, and likely to happen to a' men unaccustomed to see butchin——

English Opium-Eater. "They produce," continues Mr Southey, "a worse effect upon the persons employed on them;" and again, he says, "perhaps, however, the hardness of heart which this occupation is believed to produce, may, in most cases, have been the cause wherefore it is chosen."

Shepherd. I can scarcely agree wi' that——

English Opium-Eater. Allow me, Mr Hogg, to complete what I have got to say, without interruption. Here the Reviewer falls foul of Mr Southey for an alleged libel on Butchers. "Mr Southey," quoth he, "represents them as men who are necessarily reprobates — as men who must necessarily be reprobates — even in the most improved state of society—even, to use his own phrase, in a Christian Utopia." Here follows a forty-line page of high moral vituperation. Now, the charge is entirely false, and the Reviewer must have known it to be entirely false. For there is an alternation — an interchange of sentiment on this subject between the two interlocutors in the Dialogue. Sir Thomas More corrects this first wholly natural, but partly erroneous impression, made on the mind of Montesinos by the sight of the shambles, and shows him "how he is mistaken." Montesinos represents himself as being set right by the gracious Ghost, and says, "The best answer, however, to what I was unthinkingly disposed to credit, is, that the men engaged in this occupation are not found to furnish more than their numerical proportion of offenders to the criminal list; and that, as a body, they are by no means worse than any other set of men upon the same level." He then quotes Dr Beddoes, and enters somewhat deeper into the philosophy of

the matter — observing, "because they are well fed, they are not exposed to the temptation which necessity brings with it, the mother of crime, as well as of arts; and their occupation being constant, they are likewise safe from the dangers of idleness. The relation, too, in which they stand to their customers, places them in a salutary degree of dependence, and makes them understand how much their own welfare depends upon civility and good conduct.

Shepherd. Macaulay can hae nae principle—that's flat.

English Opium-Eater. Sir Thomas More is then made to say to Montesinos—"You have thus yourself remarked, that men who exercise the occupation, which of all others at first sight appears most injurious to the human heart, and which inevitably must injure it to some degree, are, in point of fact, no worse than their neighbours, and much better than the vagrant classes of the population, and than those whose employment is casual. They are better, because they fare better, and are more under the influence of order. Improve the condition of others, bring them within the sphere of order, instead of leaving them merely within the reach — the chance reach, almost it may be called—of vindictive law, and the result will be the same."

Tickler. Your exposure, sir, of the calumniator, is complete.

English Opium-Eater. Allow me to read one short passage more from the Review,—"And what reasons are given for a judgment so directly opposed to every principle of sound and manly morality?—*Merely this*—that he cannot abide the sight of their apparatus—that, from certain peculiar associations, he is affected with disgust when he passes by their shops."

Shepherd. O man! I wadna be that Macaulay for ony money.[1]

[1] In justice to Mr Macaulay, it is right to mention, that in republishing this article in his collected Essays, he has introduced the following note: "A passage (that namely which is here animadverted on), in which some expressions used by Mr Southey were misrepresented, certainly without any unfair intention, has been here omitted." In justice, also, to Professor Wilson, I must be permitted to state that he lived to alter very materially his estimate of Mr Macaulay, as expressed in this and a subsequent Noctes. His last public act—performed too, at a time when his feeble health made such an act a sore tax upon his strength—was to record his vote in favour of the eloquent historian in 1852, when he was returned to Parliament as member for the city of Edinburgh. This tribute of respect was accepted by Mr Macaulay—so I have been given to understand—in the same cordial spirit in which it was tendered.

Hoo sma' he looks! Hoo sma' he sings! and hoo sma' he maun feel in the preevat consciousness, and the public conviction, o' ha'in deliberately traduced sic a man as Mr Soothey! without ony ither provocation, I jalouse, than the sense o' inferiority, that keeps gnawin like a veeper at the veetals o' the envious, and licks up party spite, or rather party spittle, a foul and fetid foam that drenches the worm's fangs—if it has gotten ony—and a' worms hae organs o' some sort or ither for bitin—in a poison that only the mair blackens and embitters its ain rotten heart.

North (*glancing over the article in the Review*). What stuff's this about lawyers and soldiers?

English Opium-Eater. All of the same kidney—silly sophistry or monstrous misrepresentations—which——

North. The Whigs will chuckle and crow over—but the gentlemen of England tread scornfully under foot, as something smelling of a new kind of Cockneyism, even more offensive to the senses than that which stinks Little Britain.

Shepherd. Fling't frae you. Wi' a' your fauts, sir, you never admit intil Maga ony malignant attacks on Genius, and Virtue, and Knowledge—and when or where were these Three ever united mair gloriously, and mair beautifully, and endearingly, than in Mr Soothey? Had Mr Soothey been a Whig—and had he leeved in Embro' here—and had you written in that way about him—(a great heap o' maist impossible and contradictory supposes,[1] I alloo—something like supposing licht darkness, and straught crooked, and honey the jice o' aloes)—what a hullyballoo would hae been raised again' you, and what'n an assassin wouldna ye hae been ca'd, like the Auld Man o' the Mountain! But ye never was an assassin, sir, ony mair than a Saunt. O' a' the Great Poets o' the age, whatever their politics or their purity, you have sounded the eulogium, trumpet-tongued, till a' the warld rang wi' their fame. What'n a contrast atween Maga and the Ram!—But whisht, I heard a fisslin in the gallery!

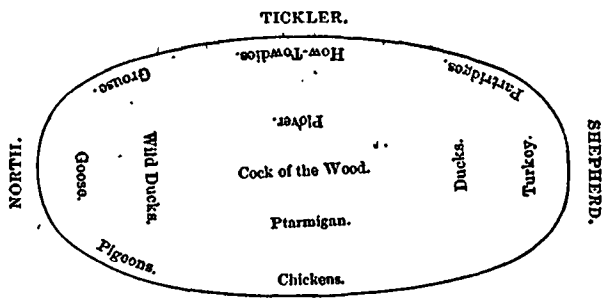
North. Leander!

(*The horns sound, and enter* ὁι περι AMBROSE.)

Shepherd (*in continuation*). Ggemm! and Fools!

[1] *Supposes*—suppositions.

FOURTH COURSE—FOWL.



Shepherd. I fancy the order of the day hauds gude alike through a' the coorses—every man helpin himsel to the dish neist him;—and then to think hoo the verra seasons themsels accommodate their productions to our Festival!—Soups, Fish, Flesh, and Fool o' a' sorts in perfection, in spite o' the month—it's really curious, and shows hoo folk's the slaves o' habit.—Mr North, onything gaun on, up-by yonner in Lunnon, in the literary department?

North. I live so entirely out of the literary world, James, that——

Shepherd. Ye leeve in a' kind o' warlds, you warlock; and confoun' me if I dinna believe ye employ spies.

North. None, my dear James, but these two eyes—now waxing somewhat dim—and these two ears, now waxing somewhat deaf—and that general sense of feeling spread by nature all over the surface of the body, all through its frame, and originating in the interior of the soul, by which one is made to feel and know a thousand indescribable things, far beyond the acquisition of the mere understanding, things of which the range grows, so it seems, wider and wider every day as we near the place of our final rest.

Shepherd. No—I canna say I do—but what's gaun on in Lunnon in the book way?

North. Sotheby has published three Specimens of his translation of Homer—The First Book of the *Iliad*—the Parting

between Hector and Andromache — and the Shield of Achilles.

Tickler. A bold, nay, a rash man, to enter the lists with Pope.

Shepherd. Wi' Pop? What for no? I've heard there's a great difference atween Pop's *Homer* and Homer's *Homer*, and I can weel believe't——

Tickler. And so perhaps will there be found to be between Sotheby's *Homer* and Homer's *Homer*, James—a great or greater——

North. Sotheby's *Georgics* stamped him the best translator in Christendom. That was, in my opinion, a more difficult achievement than an equally admirable translation of the *Iliad.* I have read his Specimens—and in an early Number—perhaps the next—intend to sift them thoroughly, comparing all the fine or difficult passages in the original with Pope, Hobbes, Chapman, Cowper—and my friend, Mr Sotheby, who will probably be found, in the whole, to have excelled all his predecessors in this great task.[1]

Tickler. I'll back Pope for a rump and dozen——

North. Done. Have you seen a little volume, James, entitled *Tales in Verse*, by the Reverend H. M. Lyte[2]—published by Marsh and Miller, and which seems to have reached a second edition?

Shepherd. Na!

North. Now, that is the right kind of religious poetry. Mr Lyte shows how the sins and sorrows of man flow from irreligion, in simple but strong domestic narratives, told in a style and spirit reminding one sometimes of Goldsmith and sometimes of Crabbe. A volume so humble in its appearance and pretensions runs the risk of being jostled off the highway into bypaths—and indeed no harm if it should, for in such retired places 'twill be pleasant reading—pensive in the shade, and cheerful in the sunshine. Mr Lyte has reaped

> "The harvest of a quiet eye,
> That broods and sleeps on its own heart"—

[1] Professor Wilson had five articles on Sotheby's *Homer* in *Blackwood's Magazine*, vols. XXIX. XXX. XXXI.

[2] The full title of Mr Lyte's work was, *Tales in Verse, illustrative of the several Petitions of the Lord's Prayer.*

and his Christian Tales will be read with interest and instruction by many a fireside. "The Brothers" is eminently beautiful; and he ought to give us another volume.

Shepherd. Wha's she, that Mrs Norton,[1] that wrote the *Sorrows o' Rosalie?*

North. Daughter of poor dear Tom Sheridan, who was indeed a star. Four generations of genius!—She is, I am told, even more beautiful than——

Shepherd. Her poetry? That 'ill no be easy, sir—for there's a saftness and a sweetness, and a brichtness, and aboon a', an indefinite, and indescribable, and undefinable, and unintelligible, general, vague, dim, fleetin speerit o' feminine sympathy and attraction—Na, na, na, these are no the richt words ava—a celestial atmosphere o' the balm o' a thousand flowers, especially lilies and roses, pinks, carnations, violets, honeysuckle, and sweet-briar—an intermingled mawgie o' the sweetest scents in natur—heaven and earth breathin upon ane anither's faces and breasts—hangin ower yon bit pathetic poem, *Rosalie*, that inclines ane to remember the fair young lady that wrote it in his prayers!

North. Good, kind, and true, my dear James. That *is* criticism.

Shepherd. It's a story of seduction, nae dout, and the prim-mou'd will purse up their lips at it, as if you were gaun to offer to kiss them—than whilk naething could be farther frae my intentions—however near it might be to their desires.

North.—

"A tale of tears—a mortal story."

Shepherd. Oh, sir! hoo delicately virtuous women write about love! Chastity feels her ain sacred character—and, when inspired by genius, isna she a touchin Muse! Modesty, Chastity's sister, though aiblins at times rather just a wee thocht ower doun-lookin, and as if a red light fell suddenly on a white lily or a white rose, blushing no that deeply, but wi' a thin, fine, faint, fleetin tint, sic as you may see within the inside o' a wee bit curled shell when walking on the yellow sea-shore,—you haud it up atween you and the licht, and feel hoo perfectly beautifu' is the pearl——

[1] The honourable and beautiful Caroline Norton, daughter of Thomas Sheridan, and granddaughter of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, distinguished alike for her poetical genius and the chequered current of her lot.

North. Mrs Norton is about to publish another poem—"The Undying One."—I do not like the title——

Shepherd. Nor me the noo. But perhaps, when published, it may be felt to be appropriate; and at a' events, whatever objections there may be to the name, there'ill be nane, I'm sure, to the speerit o' the poem.

North. I remember reading, one day last summer, at the foot of Benlomond, a little poem, called Gabrielle, from the pen of Cyrus Redding—the collaborateur of Campbell, I have heard, in the *New Monthly*—which breathed a fine, fresh, free mountain spirit. The scene is laid in Switzerland—and the heroine goes mad with woe on the death of her parents under an avalanche. There are numberless true touches of nature, both in the pathetic and the picturesque, which prove the author to belong to the right breed. He is a poet.

Shepherd. Wha's Bawl?

North. Mr Ball is a young gentleman, at least I hope so, who has modestly avoided the more difficult and extensive subjects of song, and chosen one of the easiest and narrowest —The Creation.

Shepherd. Of coorse—in blanks?

North. Yes, James, in blanks.—I see Mr Murray has advertised a "Descent into Hell."

Shepherd. That's rather alarmin—is it to be performed by Mosshy Shaubert? I thocht Mr Murray would hae keepit clear o' sic flams. The Descent into Hell! That's fearsome. You see, sir, as I was sayin afore, last coorse, a' the pious poets are plagiareesin frae Pollok. They'll a' be forgotten in the Course of Time. Preserve me! there's a pun!

North. And a very fair one, too, James.

Shepherd. A' this wark wi' religious poems reminds me o' the shootin o' a wild swan ae day, about twenty years syne, by a shepherd, on the Loch. It was indeed a maist majestic, and, at the same time, beauteous cretur, seeming, as it lay dead on the greensward, baith foreign and indigenous, to belang equally to a' the snaw-mountains o' the earth. Hunders flocked frae a' pairts o' the Forest to gaze on't, and there was some talk o' stuffin't; but ae nicht it unaccountably disappeared—and a lassie, that was comin by hersel across the moonlicht hills, said she saw something spiritual-like sailing amang the stars, on wings, that, as they winnowed the blue

air, were noiseless as a cloud; but the simple thing, at the time, never thocht of a swan. Weel—naething would serve a' the Shepherds in the Forest, but to gang ilka idle day to the Loch a-swan-shootin!—so they ca'd it—though never anither swan was shotten on't frae that day till this; but then the chiels now and then got a wild guse, and no unfrequently a wild dyuck; and on ae grand occasion, I remember Jock Linton bringin to Fahope's an auld drake and an auld dyuck, wi' about a dizzen flappers, as he ca'd them, as tame as ony that ever waddled about the dubs o' a farmyard. The truth is, they were Fahope's ain Quackies, that had stravaiged[1] to the Loch; and daft Jock never doubted they were swans and cygnets. The application, sir, 's obvious. Pollok's poem is the bonny and magnificent wild swan; a' the lave are but geese or goslins, dyucks or dyucklins—yet every Cockney shooter's as proud as puir Jock Linton, and thinks himsel an Apollo—or, as Homer—that's Pop—says,—" The god with the silver bow."

North. Yet better even such " dilution of trashiness," than a fashionable novel!

Shepherd. Do you ken, sir, I really thought *The Exclusives* no sae meikle amiss, considerin that the author's a butler—or rather—I ax his pardon—a gentleman's gentleman, that is to say, a valley-de-sham. To be sure, it was rather derogatory to his dignity, and disgracefu' to the character which he had brought frae his last place—to marry his master's cast-off kept-mistress; but then, on the other haun, she was a woman o' pairts, and o' some sma' education, and was a great help to him in his spellin and grammar, and figures o' speech. The style, for that reason, o' *The Exclusives* is rather yelegant—and had the limmer, after the loun had made her an honest woman, contributed the maitter too, the trash would hae been far better worth readin, and if nae great favourite in the heart o' touns and cities, micht hae had its ain run amang the sooburbs.

North. Mr Colburn has lately given us two books of a very different character, *Richelieu* and *Darnley*—by Mr James.[2]

[1] *Stravaiged*—strayed.

[2] G. P. R. James was born in London about the year 1800. Besides the works mentioned in the text, he was the author of many popular novels, *quæ nunc præscribere longum est.*

Richelieu is one of the most spirited, amusing, and interesting romances I ever read; characters well drawn—incidents well managed—story perpetually progressive—catastrophe at once natural and unexpected—moral good, but not goody—and the whole felt, in every chapter, to be the work of a—Gentleman.

Shepherd. And what o' *Darnley?*

North. Read, and judge.—The scribes who scrawl the fashionable novels compose a singular class. Rips of both sexes—including kept-mistresses and kept-men—fancy men, as they are called in St Giles's;—married women, with stains on their reputations as well as on their gowns, labouring under the imputation of ante-nuptial children; unmarried women, good creatures enough, and really not immodest, but who have been *in*fortunate, and, victorious in literature, have yet met a fatal overthrow from love; gamblers, now billiard-markers in hells; fraudulent bankrupts in the Bench; members once returned and received for a rotten borough; roués, who, at school and college, were reckoned clever, and, upon town, still cling to that belief, which is fast fading into pity, contempt, or scorn; forgers; borrowers; beggars; thieves; robbers; perhaps a murderer,—for Jack Thurtell had a literary turn, and had he not been hanged, would ere now have produced a fashionable novel.

Shepherd. I wunner, if sic be the constitution o' the clan, that they dinna write better byucks. Blackguards and —— are often gaily clever.[1] I suspeck you omit, in your philosophical enumeration, the mere sumphs and sumphesses.

North. Two or three men of birth and fashion do wield the pen, such as Lord Normanby, Mr Lister, and Mr Bulwer. They, in their respective styles, write well, and must be horribly annoyed at being brought into contact, by Mr Colburn's indiscriminate patronage, with the scurvy crew of both sexes whose *cacoethes scribendi* is not the worst itch that frets their cuticle.

Shepherd. Hoo's Murray's *Family Library* gettin on, sir?

North. Swimmingly, soaringly. Allan Cunningham's *Lives of the Painters*—I know not which of the two volumes is best—are full of a fine and an instructed enthusiasm. He speaks boldly, but reverentially, of genius, and of men of genius; strews his narrative with many flowers of poetry; disposes

[1] *Gaily clever*—pretty clever.

and arranges his materials skilfully; and is, in few words, an admirable critic on art—an admirable biographer of artists. Have you read Stebbings' *History of Chivalry and the Crusades?*—No. Then do. 'Tis the last, and one of the best of the series in *Constable's Miscellany*—style clear, sentiments and opinions just, descriptions picturesque, and the stream of narrative strong and flowing. Mr Stebbings is a rising writer.

Shepherd. Are there nae mair o' them, sir?

North. Several. The author of the *Collegians*[1] has much genius. Leitch Ritchie[2] writes powerfully; and Picken's *Dominie's Legacy*, three volumes of stories chiefly Scottish, well deserves a place in every library that prides itself on its own snug national corner, set apart for worthies born north of the Tweed.

Shepherd. I aye prophesied gude things o' that Picken: O but his "Mary Ogilvie" is verra affeckin. But, speakin o' national corners, read ye that letter, sir, in the *Examiner*, abusin a' Scotchmen, and the twa capital anes in answer?

North. I did, James. The *Examiner* for some years past has been a very able paper—and frequently shows fight, even with the *Standard*. They are both good swordsmen—and sometimes bleed with mutual but not mortal wounds.

"Thrice is he armed who hath his quarrel just;"

and therefore the *Examiner* contends at odds. But he is "cunning of fence"—strong and nimble-wristed—and without fear. He is—savage as he sometimes seems, nay truculent—I verily believe an honest and generous man,—and while he propounds his own opinions in his leading columns as an honest man should do, why, it is not to the discredit of a generous man, perhaps now and then to give an obscure corner to some pauper who may have seen better days, that the poor wretch, shivering in rags and filthy in squalor, may have the only comfort of which his miserable condition now admits—for cheap as gin is, it must be purchased—the relief of spitting out his bile, as the diseased drunkard dreams on some object of his insane malignity, while the fetid dregs of

[1] Gerald Griffin, an Irishman.

[2] This amiable and accomplished gentleman is now (1855) the editor, I believe, of *Chambers's Journal*.

his spleen, hawked up in a fit of coughing that crinkles of a galloping consumption, fall down a gob on the sore nakedness of his own unstockinged and shoeless feet.

Shepherd. Your defence o' the *Examiner*'s kind, but no sound, sir. He ought to send the pauper to the poor-house. Nay, true charity would alloo him gin and forbid ink.

North. There can be no bad blood in any good heart, when the question is debated, of the comparative glories of England and Scotland.

Shepherd. I'm no sure o' that, sir; dang't, the fire flees to my face whenever I articulate the first critical letter o' a syllable about to be uttered against Scotland by a Southron.

English Opium-Eater. Far be it from me, Mr Hogg, to disallow to such feelings, natural as they are; and, therefore, since right in educated minds is but another name for natural —also right; far be it from me, I repeat——

Shepherd. I wasna speakin o' you, sir, though aiblins I could show, even in your writins, certain sneering uses o' the word "Scotch," that you micht just as weel hae left to the Cockneys——

English Opium-Eater. I indignantly deny the charge, Mr Hogg. A sneer is the resource of the illiberal and illogical——

Shepherd. And deevil tak me, and you too, sir, gin you belang to either o' thae twa classifications! for, as to liberality, I've seen you walkin arm-in-arm wi' an atheist; and as to logic, were Aristotle himsel alive, ye wad sae scarify him wi' his ain syllogisms, as no to leave the silly Stagirite the likeness o' a dog.

English Opium-Eater. Of the illiberal and illogical—whereas from the earliest dawn of reason——

Shepherd. Nae mair about it, sir. I ax your pardon.

English Opium-Eater. Mr Hogg, your mind, with all its rich endowments, must be singularly illogical to conclude——

Shepherd. Oh! Mr North—Mr North—I'm about to fa' into Mr De Quinshy's hauns, sae come to my assistance; for I canna thole bein' pressed up backwards, step by step, intil a corner, till an argument that's ca'd a clencher clashes in your face, and knocks your head wi' sic force against the wa', that your croon gets a clour, leavin a dent in the wainscot.

English Opium-Eater. Insulted, sir, by your boorish breakings-in on that continuous integrity of discourse, which must be granted to each speaker, as long as he usurps not either time or turn in conversation, else dialogue loses both its name and its nature, and colloquy ceases to be—the *esse* sunk in the *posse*——

Shepherd. I never interruppit a man when he was speakin in a' my born days, sir. I'm just remarkable for the verra contrar, and for lettin everybody, baith Christian and Cockney, prose awa till he's tired, sittin mysel as patient as Job, and as dumb 's Diogenes.

English Opium-Eater. I hesitate not to affirm, that the Scottish intellect is degraded by an odious disputativeness, which truth compels me to denounce as a national depravity or disease, and which it is difficult—nay, I have found it impossible—to reconcile, in belief, with the pure possession of the sovereign reason.

North. A true bill.

English Opium-Eater. Thus private life, Scotland thorough, is polluted by the froth spurted from argumentative lips, and darkened by the frowns scowled from argumentative foreheads, and deafened by the noise grinded and grated from argumentative teeth——

Shepherd. Capital—capital—carry on, Mr De Quinshy, I'll no interrupt ye——

English Opium-Eater. While public life—witness Bar, Bench, and Pulpit—what is it but one eternal, harsh, dull debate, in which the understanding, a self-sufficient All-in-All, swallows feeling and imagination up,—so that when the shallow and muddy waters have at nightfall been run off, lo! the stony channel dry, and the meadows round—irrigated say not—but corrugated with mud-seams—and the hopes of the husbandman or shepherd buried beneath an unseemly and unsavoury deposit of——

Shepherd. Stop. I say, stop. Heard ye e'er o' Dr Chawmers, or Dr Thamson, or Dr Gordon?—Oh ho! ma man—that froon on your face says no; but I'm no feared for your froons—no me indeed—and I just tell you, that like a' the ither Lakers, you pheelosopheeze in the face o' facts—try to bend till they break in your verra hands a' practicals that staun in the way o' your ain theories—begin biggin gran' steadins

without ever diggin ony foundation—which maist likely, were ye to attempt doin, you would sune be smothered in a rush o' water and san'—an' feenally, delude yoursel intil the belief that it's a dwallin-house or mansion o' granite or freestane, while a' the rest o' mankind see wi' half an ee that it's composed o' clouds and mist, a mere castle in the air, and that, payin nae taxes, it 'ill be flaffered awa to the Back o' Beyond outower the mountain-taps, whenever Lord Raise-the-Wind gets into the government, and the Duke o' Stormaway becomes Prime Minister.

North. Noble—noble—my dear James. Yet Mr De Quincey's charge against the prevailing character of the national mind holds, with some illustrious exceptions, good. We dig deep wells in dry places—with costly enginery and a pompous display of buckets; when, by using the divining-rod of instinct, we might have detected many springs a few feet beneath the gowany greensward—nay, by observing "that inward eye that is the bliss of solitude," have seen flowing on the unsuspected waters of everlasting life!

Shepherd. Tickler! What for are ye no speakin?

Tickler. Bu!

Shepherd. What'n sort o' an answer's that, man, to a ceevil question?

Tickler. Mu!

Shepherd. Curious mainners!—they may suit Southside, where ye're a kind o' king, or three-tailed Bashaw; but here, in Northside, they dinna answer, for here every man's every inch a king, and he that plays the tyrant yonner must here submit to sit the slave.

Tickler. Whu! toothache—toothache!

Shepherd. A thousan' pardons, my dear sir! Let me get a red-het skewer frae the kitchen, and burn the nerve.

English Opium-Eater. Neither, Mr Hogg, can I bring my mind to assent to the proposition with which you ushered in the subject of our present discussion; *to wit*, that Englishmen are prone, as a people, to underrate the national virtues of Scotchmen. This allegation I hold to be the polar opposite of what is true; nor can I refrain from affirming, that manifold as are the excellencies of the Scottish character, there is a tendency, which philosophy may not approve, in the English mind—say rather, the English imagination—monstrously and

enormously to magnify their proportions—till of the entire frame and limbs thereof, thus rendered more than colossal, it may be said, in the language of Milton, "its stature reached the sky;" but reason recoils from all such dim delusions of dream-land, and sees in a Scotchman—no offence, I hope, gentlemen—a being apparently human, with sandy hair—high cheek-bones—light blue eyes—wide mouth——

Shepherd. Aiblins wi' buck-teeth like mine—and oh! pray, do tell us, sir, for we're verra ignorant, and it's a subject o' great importance, what sort o' a nose?

English Opium-Eater. The entire face acute, but coarse—intelligent, but not open——

Shepherd. Like North's there—or Tickler's. Confound me gin I think there are twa sic auld men in a' England, whuther for face or feegur. As for mainners, when Tickler's out o' the toothache, and North no in the gout or rudiments,[1] they're perfect paragons, sic as never were seen in the South; and as for mind—ma faith, if you come to that, where's their match in a' your twal millions, though our poppilation's scarcely twa, wi' women and weans out o' a' proportion?

English Opium-Eater. Nor can I imagine a charge—at once more false and loathsome—than one which I have heard even you, Mr Hogg, more than once utter against the English—as a people—that they are slaves to the passion of the palate—epicures and gluttons in one—or as the Scotch call it, sneeringly and insultingly—accompanying the reproach with a vulgar laugh, of which the lowest birth would be incapable but for the lowest breeding—"fond of good eating;"—whereas I appeal to the whole history, not of England alone, but of the world, in proof of this simple proposition—"that there exists not, nor ever did exist, a people comparable to the English, in the ascendancy in their national character of the spirituous over the sensuous, in the due ordination of the correlates——

Shepherd. I grant a' that—but still I mainteen that the English are fonder—prooder they canna be—o' rost-beef and plumm-pudden, than the Scotch o' brose and haggis,—that they speak mair and think mair—and muse and meditate atween meals mair—and when at meals, eat mair—and drink mair—and wipe the sweat aff their foreheads mair—and gie

[1] *Rudiments*—rheumatics (?)

every kind o' proof mair o' a fu' stammack—than the Scotch; —and in proof o' that proposition, alloo me, sir, also to make an appeal, no to the haill history o' the warld, but to the pot-bellies ane sees waddlin out frae front doors as he spins through English touns and villages on the tap o' a licht cotch —pot-bellies, Mr De Quinshy, o' a' sizes, frae the bouk o' my twa hauns expanded upon ane anither's finger-nebs—sae— up till, moderately speaking, the girth o' a hoghead—and no confined to the men, but extendin to the women—and, pity me, even to the weans—na, to the verra infants (what sookers!) that a' look as they were crammed—instead o' wee piggies— for the second coorse o' the denner o' the King o' the Cannibals.

English Opium-Eater (*suavely*). Though I pity your prejudices, my dear Shepherd, I cannot but smile with pleasure at your quaint and humorous illustrations.

Shepherd. Argument and illustration, sir, a' in ane. Here's anither doobler. Nae fat wean born in Scotland o' Scotch parents, was ever exhibited as a show in a caravan. Answer me that—and confute the deduction? You canna. Again— there never was a Scotch Lambert. Mercy on us—a Scotchman fifty-seven stane wecht! Feenally, a' great eatin fates[1] hae been performed in England—sic as a beggar devourin at ae meal, for a wager, atween twa sportin characters, twal poun' o' lichts and livers, ae pail o' tripe, and anither o' mashed turnip peelins,—or a farmer an equal wecht o' beef-steaks, a peck plumm-pudden, and a guse, washin a' ower wi' twa imperial gallons—that's twal bottles—o' yill.

English Opium-Eater. A man worthy to be admitted—by acclamation—member of that society whose sittings are designated by the celebrated sound—Noctes Ambrosianæ.

Shepherd. Oh! Mr De Quinshy, Mr De Quinshy! can it be that ye ken sae little o' human natur, o' Scotland, and o' yoursel, as no to ken that this denner—which you wad bring forrit as a cowp-de-grace argumentum at ony man in proof o' the Scotch bein' fonder o' gude eatin than the English— was provided wi' a' its Coorses—no aboon the half o' them's come yet—entirely, though no exclusively—FOR YOU?

English Opium-Eater. For me! Most monstrous!

North. Poor people in Scotland, sir—I do not mean paupers

[1] *Fates*—feats.

—of whom, in ordinary times, there are few—live almost on nothing—meal and water,—nor do they complain of a hard lot. The labouring classes in general, who are not in the same sense poor people, feed not so fully, believe me, in Scotland as in England.

Shepherd. Nor sae frequently in ae day. Five times is common in England. In Scotland, never mair nor three—often but twa—and never nane o' your pies and puddens! —rarely flesh-meat, except——

North. And thus, Mr De Quincey, as the appetites are very much habits, "good eating," among the lower orders in Scotland, is an indulgence or enjoyment never thought of, beyond the simple pleasure of the gratification of hunger, and of the restoration of strength and spirits so supplied. Believe me, my dear sir, it is so; whereas in England it assuredly is otherwise—though not to any degrading pitch of sensuality; —there the labouring man enjoys necessaries which here we should reckon luxuries of life.

Shepherd. Pies! pies! raised crust pies! Puddens! puddens! rice, bread, and egg puddens!

North. The whole question lies in a nut-shell. England has long been a great, powerful, rich, highly-civilised country, and has equalled, if not excelled, all the countries of modern Europe in all the useful and fine arts, in all the sciences, in all literature, and in all philosophy. Her men, as Campbell, himself a glorious Scotchman, has nobly exulted to declare, "are of men the chief,"—as Wordsworth, himself a glorious Englishman, has nobly exulted to declare,

> "Are sprung
> Of earth's first blood, have titles manifold."

During her long course of glory, she has produced from her celestial soil children of celestial seed—unequalled names—Shakespeare, Spenser, Milton, Newton, Bacon, and other giants who scaled heaven not to storm it, but to worship and adore. Scotland has enjoyed but a single century, it may be said, of full intellectual light. She has not slept nor slumbered beneath the *rutili spatia ampla diei*, but uplifted her front in inspiration to the auspicious heavens. Genius, too, has sprung fair and stately from her soil, and eyed the stars shining in fitful beauty through her midnight storms. She too

has had, and has, her poets and philosophers—"a glorious train attending;"—transfigured by the useful arts, her old mountains shout aloud for joy—the fine arts have wreathed round the brows of her cities a towery diadem, and filled with lovely imagery her halls and temples. "Science has frowned not on her humble birth,"—while Religion, the source of the highest inspiration, loves her blue skies and green fields with an especial love.

Shepherd. Stop. Ye canna impruv that—and it's God's truth, every word o't—isna't, Mr De Quinshy?

English Opium-Eater. Will you accept from me, Mr North, an essay, to be entitled, "Comparative Estimate of the English and Scotch Character?"

North. My dear sir, when did I ever decline an article of yours?

Shepherd. Faith, he seldom gies ye an opportunity—about twice, maybe, in the three years.

North. Why, Scotland is making great strides even in Sculpture. Gibson[1] and Campbell are the most eminent young sculptors now in Rome. Scoular and Steell[2] are following in their footsteps. At home, Fletcher[3] shows skill, taste, and genius; and Lawrence Macdonald,[4] equal to any one of them, if not, indeed, superior to them all—after displaying in groups or single figures, of children, "boys or virgins," and maidens in their innocent prime, a finest sense of beauty and of grace, that kindles human tenderness by touches of the ideal and divine—has lately nobly dared to take a flight up to a higher sphere, and, in his Ajax and Patroclus, his Thetis and Achilles, essayed, and with success that will soon spread wide his fame, the Heroic in Art, such as gave visible existence in Greece to her old traditions—and peopled the groves and gardens, and pillared porticoes of Athens, with gods and demigods, the tutelary genii of the Acropolis on her unconquered hill.

[1] John Gibson was born in 1790. The statue of Queen Victoria, which adorns the gallery of Buckingham Palace, is from his chisel.

[2] John Steell is now at the top of his profession in Edinburgh. One of his latest and greatest works is the equestrian statue of the Duke of Wellington, in front of the Register Office, Edinburgh.

[3] Angus Fletcher executed many admirable busts; but has now retired, I believe, from the profession.

[4] For Lawrence Macdonald see *ante*, vol. i. p. 318.

Shepherd. That's beautifu'. You maun gie us an article on Sculpture.

North. I will—including a critical account of those extraordinary works of two original, self-taught geniuses, Thom and Greenshields—Tam o' Shanter and Souter Johnny—and the Jolly Beggars.[1] The kingdoms of all the Fine Arts have many provinces—why not Sculpture?

Shepherd. Ay, why no?

North. The Greek Tragedy, James, was austere, in its principles, as the Greek Sculpture. Its subjects were all of ancestral and religious consecration; its style, high, and heroic, and divine, admitted no intermixture even of mirth, or seldom and reluctantly,—much less of grotesque and fantastic extravagancies of humour,—which would have marred the consummate dignity, beauty, and magnificence of all the scenes that swept along that enchanted floor. Such was the spirit that shone on the soft and the stately Sophocles. But Shakespeare came from heaven—and along with him a Tragedy that poured into one cup the tears of mirth and madness; showed Kings one day crowned with jewelled diadems, and another day with wild wisps of straw; taught the Prince who, in single combat,

> "Had quench'd the flame of hot rebellion
> Even in the rebels' blood,"

to moralise on the field of battle over the carcass of a fat buffoon wittily simulating death among the bloody corpses of English nobles; nay, showed the son—and that son, prince, philosopher, paragon of men—jocularly conjuring to rest his Father's Ghost, who had revisited earth "by the glimpses of the moon, making night hideous."

Shepherd. Stop—stop, sir. That's aneuch to prove your pint. Therefore, let the range o' sculpture be extended, so as to comprehend sic subjects as Tam o' Shanter and Souter Johnny—The Jolly Beggars——

North. Well, James—Of this more hereafter. You see my drift.

Shepherd. Isna Galt's *Lowrie Todd* indeed maist amusin?

[1] The exhibition of these works, which were remarkable as the handiwork of self-taught genius, used to attract considerable crowds. Greenshields executed a statuette of Sir Walter Scott.

North. It is indeed;—our friend's genius is as rare and original as ever—the field, too, he treads, is all his own—and it has yielded a rich harvest. By the by, the Editor of the *Monthly Review* is a singular person. He thinks Sir Walter Scott's *History of Scotland* meagre, feeble, and inaccurate; John Bowring no linguist, and a mere quack of no talents; Galt he declares he never, till very lately, heard of; and the Double Number of *Blackwood's Magazine* for February was, in his opinion, dull, stupid, and——

Shepherd. O the coof! Wha is he?

North. For fourteen years, James, he was hermit to Lord Hill's Father.

Shepherd. Eh?

North. He sat in a cave in that worthy Baronet's grounds,[1] with an hour-glass in his hand, and a beard once belonging to an old goat—from sunrise to sunset—with strict injunctions to accept no half-crowns from visitors—but to behave like Giordano Bruno.

Shepherd. That's curious. Wha had the selection o' him, think ye?—But what's this I was gaun to say?—Ou ay—heard ye ever Knowles's *Lectures on Dramatic Poetry?*

North. I have—They are admirable—full of matter—elegantly written, and eloquently delivered. Knowles is a delightful fellow—and a man of true genius.[2]

[*The Horns sound for the Fifth Course*—"*The Gloomy Nicht is gatherin fast.*" *Enter* PICARDY, *&c. The Pipe is obstructed—the Gas Orrery extinguished—and a strange hubbub heard in the mirk.—Finis.*

[1] "There really was," says the American editor, "such a case, and such a hermit (*several of the latter indeed*) at Hawkstone, the seat of the Hill family in Shropshire." The allusion to Giordano Bruno, who was burnt by the Inquisition for heresy about the year 1600, I do not understand.

[2] James Sheridan Knowles, born at Cork, 1784, is the author of *Virginius*, *The Hunchback*, and other popular dramas.

XXIV.

(MAY 1830.)

Scene,—The Blue Parlour. Time,—Seven o'Clock. Present—NORTH, ENGLISH OPIUM-EATER, SHEPHERD, *and* TICKLER, *each with a silver Coffee-Pot before him, and a plate of Muffins.*

Shepherd. I'm sorry to see you, sir, wi' crape on your hat, and weepers[1] on your cuffs; but I hope it's nae dear freen—only some common acquaintance, or distant relation?

North. A worthy man, James, for whom I had a sincere regard, though our separate pursuits in life kept us pretty much asunder for the last thirty years. Death renews the youth of friendship.

Shepherd. Maist miraculously.

North. You need not look so glum, James; for I purpose being becomingly cheerful over my coffee.

Tickler. Ætat.?

North. The defunct was threescore-and-ten—died of a short and unpainful disease—has left his widow comfortable—and his sons rich—and to myself a hundred guineas for a mourning ring:

Shepherd. That's useless extravagance.

North. No, James, it is not. A man on his deathbed should not be shabby. My friend knew that I had a hereditary love of such baubles.

Shepherd. What kirkyard was he buried in?

North. Greyfriars.

Shepherd. An impressive place. Huge, auld, red, gloomy church—a countless multitude o' grass graves a' touchin ane

[1] White muslin round the cuffs of the coat.

anither—a' roun' the kirkyard wa's marble and freestane monuments without end, o' a' shapes, and sizes, and ages—some quaint, some queer, some simple, some ornate; for genius likes to work upon grief—and these tombs are like towers and temples, partakin not o' the noise o' the city, but staunin aloof frae the stir o' life, aneath the sombre shadow o' the castle cliff, that heaves its battlements far up into the sky. A sublime cemetery—yet I sudna like to be interred in't—it looks sae dank, clammy, cauld——

Tickler. And uncomfortable. A corpse would be apt to catch its death of cold.

Shepherd. Whisht.—Where did he leeve?

North. On the sea-shore.

Shepherd. I couldna thole to leeve on the sea-shore.

Tickler. And pray why not, James?

Shepherd. That everlastin thunner sae disturbs my imagination, that my soul has nae rest in its ain solitude, but becomes transfused as it were into the michty ocean, a' its thochts as wild as the waves that keep foamin awa into naething, and then breakin back again into transitory life—for ever and ever and ever—as if neither in sunshine nor moonlight, that multitudinous tumultuousness, frae the first creation o' the world, had ever ance been stilled in the blessedness o' perfect sleep.

English Opium-Eater. In the turmoil of this our mortal lot, the soul's deepest bliss assuredly is, O Shepherd! a tideless calm.

Shepherd. The verra thocht, sir—the verra feelin—the verra word. That Moon ye see, sir—bonny as she is in heaven—and when a' the starry lift is blue, motionless and believes as if nae planet were she, but the central soul o' the lovely lichts round which the silent nicht thocht-like revolves dreamily—dreamily, far far away—She will not even for ae single hour let the auld Ocean shut his weary een, that often in their sleeplessness seem longing, methinks, for the still silence o' the steadfast earth.

English Opium-Eater. The majesty of power is in the gentleness of beauty. Cannot an eye—call it in its trembling light a blue-sphered tear—in one moment set countless human hearts a-beating, till love in ecstasy is sick as death, and life a spiritual swoon into Paradise?

Shepherd. Ay, ay, sir. Ance or twice in my life hae I seen a smile, for sake o' which I would hae sacrificed my soul. But nae fiend—nae demon was she who sent it through a' my being, like a glimpse o' holiest moonlight through a dark wood, bathin the ground-flowers in beauty as they look up to their sister stars,—an angel she—yet she died, and underwent burial in the dust—forgetfulness and oblivion!

English Opium-Eater. Say not oblivion. A poet's heart is the sanctuary of dim and tender memories—holy ground haunted by the ghosts of the beautiful—some of whom will be for long long years, as if they were not—sojourning in some world beyond the reach of thought—when, lo! all in a moment, like white sea-birds, gleaming inland from the misty main, there they are glide-gliding through the illumined darkness, and the entire region of the spirit is beatified by the heavenly visitants.

Shepherd. Nae delightfu' thocht ever utterly and eternally perishes. A' the air is filled wi' their perpetual presence, invisible, inaudible—during life's common hours—but nae barrier is atween them and us—aften do we feel they're near when the hush o' moonlicht is on the hills—although a sweet vague consciousness is a' that stirs our souls;—and at times mair especially sacred—when virtue clears the inner eye-sight, and fines the inner ear-touch, we know them as we knew them of yore, a divine restoration; mortality puts on immortality, and we feel there is no such thing as—death!

North. The exterior surface of the earth is a shield spread by God between the eyes of the living and the faces of the dead.

Shepherd. What if it were not so? Grief wad gang mad!

North. What pleasanter spot, James, than a country kirk-yard!

Shepherd. I steek my een—and I see ane the noo—in a green laigh lown spot amang the sheep-nibbled braes. A Funeral! See that row of schoolboy laddies and lassies drawn up sae orderly o' their ain still accord, half curious and half wae,[1] some o' the lassies wi' lapfu's o' primroses, and gazin wi' hushed faces as the wee coffin enters in on men's shouthers that never feel its wecht, wi' its doun-hangin and gracefu' velvet pall, though she that is hidden therein was

[1] *Wae*—sorrowful.

the poorest o' the poor! Twa-three days ago the body in that coffin was dancin like a sunbeam ower the verra sods that are noo about to be shovelled over it! The flowers she had been gatherin—sweet, innocent thochtless cretur—then moved up and doun on her bosom when she breathed—for she and nature were blest and beautifu' in their spring. An auld white-headed man, bent sairly doun, at the head o' the grave, lettin the white cord slip wi' a lingerin reluctant tenderness through his withered hauns! It has reached the bottom. Wasna that a dreadfu' groan, driven out o' his heart, as if a strong-haun'd man had smote it, by the first fa' o' the clayey thunder on the fast-disappearing blackness o' the velvet—soon hidden in the bony mould! He's but her grandfather—for she was an orphan. *But* her grandfather! Wae's me! wha is't that writes in some silly blin' book that auld age is insensible—safe and secure frae sorrow—and that dim eyes are unapproachable to tears?

Tickler. Not till dotage drivels away into death. With hoariest eld often is parental love a passion deeper than ever bowed the soul of bright-haired youth, watching by the first dawn of daylight the face of the sleeping bride.

Shepherd. What gars us a' fowre talk on such topics the nicht? Friendship! That, when sincere—as ours is sincere—will sometimes saften wi' a strange sympathy merriest hearts into ae mood o' melancholy, and pitch a' their voices on ae key, and gie a' their faces ae expression, and mak them a' feel mair profoundly because they a' feel thegither, the sadness and the sanctity—different words for the same meaning—o' this our mortal life;—I howp there's naething the maitter wi' wee Jamie.

North. That there is not, indeed, my dearest Shepherd. At this very moment he is singing his little sister asleep.

Shepherd. God bless you, sir; the tone o' your voice is like a silver trumpet.—Mr De Quinshy, hae you ever soum'd up the number o' your weans?[1]

English Opium-Eater. Seven.

Shepherd. Stop there, sir, it's a mystical number,—and may they aye be like sae mony planets in bliss and beauty circlin roun' the sun.

English Opium-Eater. It seemeth strange the time when as

[1] *Weans*—children.

yet those Seven Spirits were not in the body—and the air which I breathed partook not of that blessedness which now to me is my life. Another sun—another moon—other stars—since the face of my first-born. Another earth—another heaven! I loved, methought—before that face smiled—the lights and the shadows, the flowers and the dews, the rivulets that sing to Pilgrims in the wild,—the mountain wells, where all alone the "book-bosomed" Pilgrim sitteth down—and lo! far below the many-rivered vales sweeping each to its own lake—how dearly did I love ye all! Yet was that love fantastical—and verily not of the deeper soul. Imagination over this "visible diurnal sphere," spread out her own spiritual qualities, and made the beauty that beamed back upon her dreams. Nor wanted tenderest touches of humanity—as my heart remembered some living flower by the door of far-up cottage, where the river is but a rill. But in my inner spirit, there was then a dearth which Providence hath since amply, and richly, and prodigally furnished with celestial food—which is also music to the ears, and light to the eyes, and the essence of silken softness to the touch—a family of immortal spirits, who but for me never had been brought into the mystery of accountable and responsible being! Of old I used to study the Spring—but now its sweet sadness steals unawares into my heart—when among the joyous lambs I see my own children at play. The shallow nest of the cushat seems now to me a more sacred thing in the obscurity of the pine-tree. The instincts of all the inferior creatures are now holy in my eyes—for, like Reason's self, they have their origin in love. Affection for my own children has enabled me to sound the depths of gratitude. Gazing on them at their prayers, in their sleep, I have had revelations of the nature of peace, and trouble, and innocence, and sin, and sorrow, which, till they had smiled and wept, offended and been reconciled, I knew not—how could I?—to be within the range of the far-flying and far-fetching spirit of love, which is the life-of-life of all things beneath the sun, moon, and stars.

Shepherd. Do ye ken, sir, that I love to hear ye speak far best ava when you lay aside your logic? Grammar's aften a grievous and gallin burden; but logic's a cruel constraint on thochts, and the death of feelings, which ought aye to rin blendin intil ane anither like the rainbow, or the pink, or the

peacock's neck, a beautifu' confusion o' colours, that's the mair admired the mair ignorant you are o' the science o' opticks. I just perfectly abhor the word "therefore," it's sae pedantic and pragmatical, and like a doctor. What's the use o' premises? commend me to conclusions. As for inferences, put them into the form o' apothegms, and never tell the world whence you draw them—for then they look like inspiration. And dinna ye think, sir, that reasoning's far inferior to intuition?

Tickler. How are your transplanted trees, James?

Shepherd. A' dead.

Tickler. I can't endure the idea of a transplanted tree. Transplantation strikes at the very root of its character, as a stationary and steadfast being, flourishing where nature dropt it. You may remove a seedling; but 'tis sacrilege to hoist up a huge old oak by the power of machinery, and stick him into another soil, far aloof from his native spot, which for so many years he had sweetly or solemnly overshadowed.

Shepherd. Is that feelin no a wee owre imaginative?

Tickler. Perhaps it is—and none the worse of that either—for there's a tincture of imagination in all feelings of any pith or moment—nor do we require that they should always be justified by reason. On looking on a tree with any emotion of grandeur or beauty, one always has a dim notion of its endurance—its growth and its decay. The place about it is felt to belong to it—or rather they mutually belong to each other, and death alone should dissolve the union.

Shepherd. I fin' mysel convincin—that is, being convinced—but no by your spoken words, but by my ain silent thochts. I felt a' you say, and mair too, the first time I tried to transplant a tree. It was a birk—a weepin birk—and I had loved and admired it for twenty years by its ain pool, far up ane o' the grains[1] o' the Douglas Water, where I beat Mr North at the fishin——

North. You never beat me at the fishing, sir, and never will beat me at the fishing, sir, while your name is Hogg. I killed that day—in half the time—double the number——

Shepherd. But wecht, sir—wecht, sir—wecht. My creel was mair nor dooble yours's wecht—and every wean kens that in fishin for a wager, wecht wins—it's aye decided by wecht.

[1] *Grains*—branches. The Douglas Water is a tributary of the Yarrow.

North. The weight of your basket was not nearly equal to mine, you——

Shepherd. Confound me gin, on an average, ane o' my troots didna conteen mair cubic inches than three o' yours—while, I had a ane to produce that, on his first showin his snoot, I could hae sworn was a sawmon;—he would hae filled the creel his ain lane—sae I sent him hame wi' a callant I met gaun to the school. The feck o' yours was mere fry—and some had a' the appearance o' bein' baggy menons. You're a gran' par-fisher, sir; but you're nae Thorburn[1] either at troots, morts, or fish.[2]

North (*starting up in a fury*). I'll fish you for——

Shepherd. Mr North! I'm ashamed to see you exposin yoursel afore Mr De Quinshy—besides, thae ragin fits are dangerous—and, some time or ither, 'ill bring on apoplexy. Oh! but you're fearsome the noo—black in the face, or rather blue and purple—and a' because I said that you're nae Thorburn at the fishin! Sit doun—sit doun, sir.

[Mr North *sits down, and cools and calms himself.*

English Opium-Eater. Mr Hogg, you were speaking a few minutes ago of transplanting——

Shepherd. Ou ay. There it stood, or rather hung, or rather floated, ower it's ain pool, that on still days showed anither birk as bonny's itsel, inverted in a liquid warld. A bed o' fine broon mould had sunk doun frae the brae aboon, a' covered wi' richest moss-embroidery, and there a' by itsel, never wearying in the solitary place, grew up that bonniest o' a' bonny birks frae a seedlin—when first I saw't—like a bit wee myrtle plant—ilka year gracefu'er and mair gracefu', till a full-grown tree—sic brae-born birks are never verra tall—it waved its light masses o' delicate leaves, tress-like, in the wind, or let them hang doun, dependin in the lown air as motionless as in a pictur. The earliest primroses aye peeped out a' round its silver stem,—and whether 'twas their scent, or that o' the leaves of my sweet tree, I never could tell—but oh! as I used to lie in my plaid aneath its shade—scarcely a shade, only a sort of cool dimness—beside the dancing linn—as Thamson says, the "air was balm," indeed—and sae thocht the wee muirland birds that twittered—unalarmed at me—

[1] A noted angler on Tweedside.

[2] In the language of anglers, salmon alone are called *fish*.

amang the foliage. Like a fond but foolish lover, I said intil mysel, ae day o' especial beautifu'ness, as I was touchin its silken bark—"I'll tak it doun to Mount Benger, and plant it on the knowe afore the door, early some morning, to delight wee Jamie wi' astonishment." Wae's me! for that infatuation! I did sae, and wi' as much tenderness as ever I took a bonny lassie in my arms—but never mair did the darling lift up its head; lifeless-looking frae the first were a' its locks o' green licht—the pale silk bark soon was sairly ruffled—and ere Midsummer came—it was stane-dead! Aften, aften—in the drought—did wee Jamie gang wi' his watering-pan, and pour the freshness amang its roots—but a' in vain; and wud ye believe't, the lovin cretur grat when he saw that a' the leaves were red, and that it had dee'd just as his pet-lamb had dune—for his affection had imbued it with a breathin and a sentient life.

Tickler. Why, James, you are "poachin for the pathetic." Sir Henry Steuart's[1] groves are a living proof of his skill and science—but they are not the haunts dear to my imagination. I love the ancient gloom of self-sown, unviolated woods. But these trees were not born here—they are strangers—aliens—or, worse—upstarts. I should wish to feel round my mansion the beauty of that deep line of Cowley's (I think)—

"And loves his old contemporary trees!"

But these—whatever their age—were carted hither—all their roots have been handled——

Shepherd. Nae mair about it. It's still usefu'—sic transplantation—and I esteem every man who, by ony sort o' genius, skill, or study, contributes to the adornment o' naked places, and, generally speakin, to the beautifyin o' the earth. Sir Henry has dune that—in his degree—and may, therefore, in ae sense or licht, be ranked among the Poets. Nae man loves trees as he does, without poetry in his soul—his skill in transplantin is equal to his skill in translation; and I'm tauld he's a capital Latin scholar—wutness his English Sawlust; and I wush he had been at Mount Benger when I carried aff that bonny virgin birk frae her birthplace,—in that case, she had been alive at this day, wi' bees and burdies amang her branches.

[1] See *ante*, p. 212.

Tickler. I should like to be at a Bear-Hunt. My friend Lloyd describes it capitally in those most entertaining volumes, *Northern Sports*,—or what do you call them—published t'other day by Colburn.

Shepherd. It's a shame to kill a bear, except, indeed, for his creesh and skin. He's an affectionate cretur amang his kith and kin—in the bosom o' his ain family, sagawcious and playsome—no sae rouch in his mind as in his mainners—a good husband, a good son, and a good father.

Tickler. Did you receive Lardner's *Pocket Encyclopædia*, James?

Shepherd. Ay—I did sae. Was 't you that sent it out? Thank ye, sir. It's chokefu' o' maist instructive and enterteenin maitter. Cheap.

Tickler. Very. And Bowring's *Poetry of the Magyars?*

Shepherd. Them too. Mr Bowering is a benefactor, sir. National Poetry shows a people's heart. History's aften cauldrife; but sangs and ballants are aye warm wi' passion. Ilka national patriotism has its ain peculiar and characteristic feturs, just like ilka national face. A Hun's no a Scot, nor a Dutchman a Spaniard. Yet can they a' feel ane anither's national sangs, could they read ane anither's language. But that they canna do; and therefore a man wi' the gift o' tongues, like Mr Bowering, extends, by his translations, knowledge o' the range o' the infinite varieties o' our common humanities, and enables us to break doun our prejudices and our bigotries, in the conviction that all the nations o' the earth hae the same sympathies as ourselves, racy as our own, and smellin o' the soil in which they grow, be it watered by the Rhine, the Ebro, the Maese, or ony ither outlandish river.

Tickler. What say ye, James, to the vote t'other day in Parliament about the Jews?

Shepherd. I hae nae objections to see a couple o' Jews in Parliament. Wull the members be made to shave, think ye, sir? Ould cloes! Ould cloes! A' that the Hoose 'ill want then, for picturesque as weel as political effeck, will be a few Blacks—here and there a Negro.

North. Gentlemen, no politics.

Shepherd. Be't sae.—Mr North, what for do you never review books about religion?

North. Few good enough to deserve it. I purpose, however, articles very soon, on Dr M'Crie's *Progress and Suppres-*

sion of the Reformation in Spain,[1] (also his History of similar events in Italy) and Inglis's[2] admirable *View of the Evidences of Christianity;* Mr Douglas of Cavers' delightful volume, *The Truths of Religion; The Natural History of Enthusiasm*, a very able disquisition;[3] Le Bas' Sermons, eloquent, original, and powerful; Dr Morehead's[4] ingenious and philosophical Dialogues—

Shepherd. I love that man—

North. So do I, James; and so do all that know him personally—his talents—his genius—and better than both, his truly Christian character—mild and pure—

Shepherd. And also bricht.

North. Yes, bright.

"In wit a man—simplicity a child."

Shepherd. What sort o' vols., sir, are the *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*,[5] published by Curry in Dublin?

North. Admirable. Truly, intensely Irish. The whole book has the brogue—never were the outrageous whimsicalities of that strange, wild, imaginative people so characteristically displayed; nor, in the midst of all the fun, frolic, and folly, is there any dearth of poetry, pathos, and passion. The author's a jewel, and he will be reviewed next number.

Shepherd. The Eerishers are marchin in leeterature, *pawri pashu*,[6] wi' us and the Southrons.—What's stirrin in the Theatre?

North. T. P. Cooke, THE SEAMAN, is to take his benefit one of these nights——

Shepherd. Let's a' gang in a body, to show our pride and glory in the British navy, of which he is the best, the only Ideal Representative, that ever rolled with sea-born motion across the stage. Nae caricaturist he—but Jack himsel. He intensifies to the heart and the imagination the word—TAR.

[1] A complete edition of Dr M'Crie's writings, all of which are admirable, is now in the course of publication by the Messrs Blackwood.

[2] Dr Inglis was minister of the Greyfriars' Church, Edinburgh. For many years he was the leader of the less extreme section of the Church of Scotland. Indeed, his force of character, clearness of intellect, and vigorous eloquence, placed him above all rivalry in the ecclesiastical courts. He died in 1834.

[3] By Isaac Taylor.

[4] Dr Morehead was for many years an Episcopalian minister in Edinburgh.

[5] By William Carleton.

[6] *Pari passu.*

North. So, in a different style, does Baker of the Caledonian Theatre.

Shepherd. Bass is a speerited manager.

North. He is; and there I heard, a few weeks ago, one of the sweetest, strongest, and most scientific singers that now chants on the boards — Edmunds. His Black-Eyed Susan is delicious. He is but a lad—but promises to be a Braham.

Shepherd. Is it possible that Mr Murray is gaun to alloo Miss Jarman[1] to return to Covent Garden?

North. Impossible! A fixed star—The sweet creature must remain in our Scottish sky — nor is there now on any stage a more delightful actress. Her genius on the stage is not greater than her worth in private life.

Tickler. An accomplished creature — simple and modest in mind and manners—yet lively—and awake to all harmless mirth and merriment—a temper which is the sure sign and constant accompaniment of purity and innocence. We must not lose The Jarman.

North. Nor her sister Louisa — a charming singer, and skilful teacher of singing—quite the lady—and in all respects most estimable.

Shepherd. Saw ye ever Miss Smithson?[2]

North. Yes—In Jane Shore. She enacted that character finely and powerfully,—is an actress not only of great talent, but of genius—a very lovely woman—and, like Miss Jarman, altogether a lady in private life.

Shepherd. I'm glad to hear ye say sae—for you're the best judge o' actin in a' Scotland.

North. Oh dear! Oh dear! Oh dear! Oh!

Shepherd. What's the maitter—my dear sir—what's the maitter?

North. Racking rheumatism.

Shepherd. It's a cruel complaint. I had it great pairt o' the wunter—first in my head—then in my——

North. Oh! oh! oh! oh! oh! oh!

Shepherd. I'll gie ye a simple and infallible receit for't, sir, if you hae courage to ack on't. The morn's mornin tak a doze o' drogs,—then get Mr Nibbs—Mr Mapplestone's successor[3]—

[1] Miss Jarman was afterwards married to Mr Ternan, manager of the theatre at Newcastle.

[2] Miss Smithson, says the American editor, married Hector Berlioz, the composer, and died in 1854.

[3] Skilful cuppers in Edinburgh.

to cup you atween the shouthers;—he's maist expert wi' his box o' lancets—then tak the shoor-bath—no, that's an anachronism—tak it the first thing in the mornin afore the drogs;—then get an auld woman—be sure she's an auld ane, sir—no Mrs Gentle—to nip your arms, and legs, and back, wi' her finger and her thoomb—to nip you severely, sir, and you maunna mind the sairness—for at least twa hours; then get in twa cawdies,[1] and gar them beat a' the same pairts wi' swutches as if they were dustin carpets—say for twenty minutes;—then get the above auld woman again to rub and scrub your naked body, frae head to heel, wi' ane o' the hard brushes that John polishes the tables wi'—say for half an hour; then a change o' instrument or weapon—for hard brush coarse towel—and ten minutes o' dichtin; then—the receit's drawin to a close—gar the gardener flog you a' ower, and smairtly, wi' a succession o' fresh bunches o' nettles, that 'ill burn your skin as red's red currans—and mak ye dance, aiblins, up and doun the floor withouten mindin the want o' musio;—then cover your limbs and trunk wi' a peculiar pastey plaister that you can get at Duncan and Ogilvie's,—the princes o' apothecaries,—then on wi' your leathern and your flannel waistcoats, and your nicht-shirt, and in atween twa feather-beds in a room wi' a roosin fire; if the barometer out o' doors in the shade is at auchty sae muckle the better; and if your rheumatism stauns *that*, there's nae howp for you on this side o' the grave, and you maun e'en lay your account wi' bein' for life a lameter.

North. To-morrow, James, I will assuredly try your receipt. Will you step down to the Lodge, and help to administer the medicine?

Shepherd. Wi' a' my heart. But I'm wearyin to hear Mr De Quinshy taukin. Tak up some coffee, my dear sir. I wush you mayna burst yoursel wi' swallowin sic coontless cups o' coffee. But what's this I was gaun to ask ye—ou ay—what's your Idea o' Education?

English Opium-Eater. The over anxiety of improvement, Mr Hogg, introduces into education much perilous and injurious innovation. An anxiety for particular objects of minute regard often urges on the understanding of those who do not understand properly the single and great ends which alone make education important; and they are not aware that the

[1] *Cawdies*—street-porters.

prosecution of those pursuits injures and weakens the mind itself, diverting its powers from their proper aim, and disturbing their silent and spontaneous growth.

Shepherd. I like that weel—silent and spontawneous growth—like a bit blade o' grass, or a bit flower, or a bit buddie no the size o' my nail unfaulding itsel to the dew and sunshine into a leaf as braid's my haun—or a bit burdie, the beginnin o' ae week a blin' ba' o' puddock hair, at the beginnin o' the neist a mottled and spangled urchin hotchin restlessly in the nest, and ere three weeks are ower, glintin wi' short, uncertain, up-and-doun flichts in and out amang the pear-blossoms o' a glorious orchard—sic an orchard, for example, as in spring makes the bonny toun o' Jeddart a pictur o' Paradise in its prime. Silent and spontawneous growth—a wise expression!

English Opium-Eater. The primary objects of education are few and great;—nobleness of character, honourable and generous affections, a pure and high morality, a free, bold, and strong, yet a temperate and well-governed intellectual spirit.

Shepherd. Hoo many miss these great ends a'thegither! Perhaps frae bein' a' huddled thegither under ae general system.

English Opium-Eater. Just so, Mr Hogg. The means which nature has provided for attaining the great ends of education are infinitely various. To each she has assigned individual character. According to that character must be his virtue, his happiness, his knowledge. The feelings and affections, which are different to different minds; desires which reign powerfully in one heart and are unknown to another; faculties of intelligence infinitely diversified, springing up into glad activity, and by their unseen native impulses,—all these make to each, in his own mind, a various allotment of love, joy, and power,—a moral and intellectual being, individual and his own. In the work of education, then, we look on one who has not only a common nature which he shares with us, but a separate nature which divides him from us. Though we may understand an infancy—and that is not easy—which reflects to us the miniature of our own mind, it is difficult, indeed, to understand that of any mind which is unlike our own, which in intellect, in imagination, and love, has faculties and affections with which our own mind does not acquaint us. This is a circumstance which peculiarly exposes us to the danger of thwarting the providence and bounty of Nature, and of

overruling, in our rude, unskilful ignorance, the processes she is carrying on in her wisdom for the happiness, the virtue, and the power of the human soul she is rearing up for life.

Shepherd. Oh! but you're wise, sir, Mr De Quinshy—oh! but you're unco wise!

English Opium-Eater. Look at a child on its mother's breast.

Tickler. Hem!

English Opium-Eater. The impulses, and movements, and quick impressions of sense—or of a sentient being living in sense—are the first matter of understanding to a high intellectual nature.

Shepherd. Mr Tickler, nae yawning—hearken till Mr De Quinshy.

English Opium-Eater. By these touches of pleasure and pain it is wakened from the sleep of its birth. By sounds that merely lull in it the sense of pain, or reach it with emotions of delight, it is called to listen in that ear which will one day divide with nicest apprehension all the words of human discourse, and receive in the impulses of articulated sound the communicated thoughts of intellectual natures resembling itself.

Shepherd. The bit prattler!

English Opium-Eater. That eye, which watches the approach or departure of some living object yet unknown, which traverses its little sphere of vision to look for some living toy, is exercising that vision which shall one day behold all beauty, and read wisdom in the stars of heaven. And that hand, with its feeble and erring aim now so impotent and helpless, shall perhaps one day shape the wonderful fabrics of human intelligence—shall build the ship, or guide the pencil—or write down wisdom—or draw sounds like the harmonies of angels from the instruments its own skill has framed. And what are the words to which those lisped-out murmurings shall change? Shall Senates hang listening to the sound? Shall thronged and breathless men receive from them the sound of eternal life? Shall they utter song to which unknown ages shall listen with wonder and reverence? Or shall they only, in the humble privacy of quiet life, breathe delight with instruction to those who love their familiar sound—or the adoration of a spirit prostrate before its Creator in prayer?[1]

[1] This is a fine expansion of Leibnitz's remark, *Præsens est gravidum futuro.*

Shepherd. That's real eloquence, sir. Fu' o' feelin—and true to nature, as the lang lines o' glimmerin licht—streamin frae the moon shinin through amang and outower the taps o' the leafy trees.

English Opium-Eater. Let us hear with scorn, O gifted Shepherd! of the mind of such a creature being a blank, a *Tabula Rasa*, a sheet of white paper.

Tickler. Like Courtenay's.[1]

English Opium-Eater. On which are to be written by sense, characters which sense-born understanding is to decipher. If we must have an image, let it be rather that of a seed which contains a germ, ere long to be unfolded to the light, in the shape of some glorious tree, hung with leaves, blossoms, and fruit; and let it be "Immortal Amaranth, the tree that grows fast by the throne of God."

Shepherd. Beautifu'—philosophical—and religious!

English Opium-Eater. How does it lift up our thoughts in reverent wonder to Him who framed this spirit and this its natural life; and through the intervention of sense, and from the face of a material world, discovered to that intelligent and adoring Spirit the evidences of his own being, and the glory of his own infinite perfections!

Shepherd. Baith sound asleep! That's shamefu'.

North. Broad awake, and delighted.

"That strain I heard was of a higher mood."

Tickler. Let us two leave Mr De Quincey and Mr Hogg for a time to their metaphysics, and have a game at chess.

[NORTH *and* TICKLER *retire to the chess-board niche.*

Shepherd. Pronounce in ae monosyllable—the power o' education. Praise?

English Opium-Eater. LOVE.

Shepherd. Hoo often fatally thocht to be—Fear!

English Opium-Eater. LOVE! Look on the orphan, for whom no one cares—for whom no face ever brightens, no voice grows musical; who performs in slavish drudgery her solitary and thankless labours, and feels that, from morning to night, the

[1] The Right Hon. Thomas P. Courtenay, Vice-President of the Board of Trade, is said to have remarked that, in reference to the business of his office, "his mind was like a blank sheet of paper."

scowl of tyranny is upon her—and see how nature pines, and shivers, and gets stunted, in the absence of the genial light of humanity.

Shepherd. Like a bit unlucky lily, chance-planted amang the cauld clay on a bleak knowe to the north, where the morning sun never, and the evening sun seldom shines, and bleakness is the general character o' the ungenial day. It struggles at a smile—does the bit bonny stranger white-lily—but you see it's far frae happy, and that it 'ill be sune dead. The bee passes it by, for it's quite scentless; and though some draps o' dew do visit it—for the heavens are still gracious to the dying outcast—yet they canna freshen up its droopin head, so weak at last, that the stalk could hardly bear up a butterfly.

English Opium-Eater. Even the buoyant—the elastic—the airy—the volatile spirit of childhood cannot sustain itself against the weight of self-degradation thus bearing it down with the consciousness of contumely and contempt. The heart seems to feel itself worthy of the scorn it so perpetually endures; and cruel humiliation destroys its virtue, by robbing it of its self-esteem.

Shepherd. God's truth.

English Opium-Eater. Look on that picture—and on *this*. See the child of the poorest parents, who love it, perhaps, the better for their poverty——

Shepherd. A thousan' — a million times the better — as Wordsworth nobly says—

"A virtuous household, though exceeding poor."

English Opium-Eater. With whom it has been early made a partaker in pleasure and in praise—and felt its common humanity, as it danced before its father's steps when he walked to his morning labour—or as it knelt beside him at morning and evening prayer; and what a contrast will there be, not in the happiness merely, but in the whole nature of these two beings!

Shepherd. A rose-tree full in bearing, balming and brightening the wilderness—a dead withered wall-flower on a sunless cairn!

English Opium-Eater. Change their lot, and you will soon change their nature. It will, indeed, be difficult to reduce the glad, and rejoicing, and self-exulting child to the level of

her who was so miserably bowed down in something worse than despair; but it will be easy—a week's kindness will do it—to rekindle life, and joy, and self-satisfaction, in the heart of the orphan-slave of the work-house—to lift her, by love, and sympathy, and praise, up to the glad consciousness of her moral being.

Shepherd. Ay—like a star in heaven set free frae the cruel clouds.

English Opium-Eater. So essential is self-estimation, even to the happiness, the innocence, and the virtue of childhood; and so dependent are they on the sympathy of those to whom nature constrains it to look, and in whom it will forgive and forget many frowning days for one chance smiling hour of transient benignity!

Shepherd. I defy the universe to explain the clearness, and the cawmness, and the comprehensiveness, to say nothing o' the truth and tenderness o' your sentiments, sir, in spite o' metapheesicks, opium, and lyin in bed till sax o'clock o' the afternoon every mornin. You're a truly unaccountable cretur.

English Opium-Eater. I have read little metaphysics for many years—and I have reduced my daily dose of laudanum to five hundred drops. My chief, almost my sole study, is of the laws of mind, as I behold them in operation in myself, and in the species.

Shepherd. And think ye, sir, that sic a study—pity me, but it's something fearsome!—is usefu' to men o' creative genius, to poets, and the like, sic as me and——

English Opium-Eater. The knowledge acquired by such study alone can furnish means to execute the enterprises of nobler art and spiritual genius.

Shepherd. I howp, sir, you're mistaen there—for I never, in a' my life, set mysel doun seriously to study human nature, and to commit ony o't to memory, as I hae often tried, always in vain, to do the Multiplication Table——

English Opium-Eater.—

> "Impulses of deeper mood
> Have come to you in solitude."

But they had all passed you by, unless your heart, your imagination, and your reason, had all been made recipient by divining dreams, which, when genius dreams, are in verity processes,

often long, dark, and intricate of thought, terminating finally in the open air, and on the celestial soil of eternal truth.

Shepherd. Aiblins, I've been mair studious than I was sensible o' at the time, when lyin by the silver springs amang the hills—for a shepherd's life is often sedentary; and gin a body 'ill just let his sowl alane, leeve it entirely to its ainsel, and no trammel't in it's flights, its wonderfu' hoo, being an essence, it 'ill keep hummin awa outower far distant braes, gangin and comin just like that never-weary insect the unquarrelsome bee, that draps doun instinctively on ilka honey-flower that scents the wild, and wheels hame to its hive by air-ways never flown afore, yet every ane o' them the nearest and directest to the straw-roofed skep in the lown sunny neuk o' the garden, that a' day lang murmurs to the sunshine a swarming sang, and at nicht emits a laigh happy hum, as if a' the multitude were but ae bee, unable to keep silence even in the hours o' sleep.

English Opium-Eater. Yes—those high minds which, with creative genius, have given, in whatever form, a permanent being to the conceptions of sublime Imagination; whether they have embodied their thoughts in colours, in marble, or in imperishable words, have all trained and enriched their genius in the same self-meditation. This is true of those whose arts seem to speak only to the eye:—The same derivation of its strength is yet more apparent in respect to the productions of those arts which use Language as the vehicle of representation. That eloquence which, in the words of great historians, yet preserves to us, in living form, the character of men and nations—which, from the lips of great speakers of old or modern times, has swayed the passions, or enlightened the reason of multitudes—that Poetry which, with a voice lifted up from age to age, has poured forth, in awful or dazzling shapes, imagery of the inmost passions and feelings of men, and made almost the soul itself a visible Being——

Shepherd. That's capital—indeed wonderful—on Coffee.

English Opium-Eater. The very powers which Bacon imparted to the science of Nature, he drew from the science of Mind. It was in the study of the Mind itself that he found the true principles which must guide Natural Philosophy.

Shepherd. Na—there you're beyond my depth a'thegither. If I gang in to dook wi' you in that pool, I'se be droon'd to a moral.

English Opium-Eater. But the yet highest character of all high study, is when viewed in its reflection on the mind. The discoveries of Astronomy have perfected Navigation. But it was not the prospect of that augmentation of human power that was in the mind of Galileo when he watched the courses of the stars, and strove in thought to explore the mechanism and motion of worlds. It satisfied him that he could *know.*

Shepherd. That's a fine thocht, sir. I'm no sleepy.

English Opium-Eater. In the trance of long and profound meditation, the power that rose in his spirit, and the illumination that flowed in upon his mind, standing alone amidst surrounding darkness, were at once the requital of all his painful vigils of thought. These were the recompense that was with him, when the prisons of jealous and trembling power were closed upon the illustrious Sage, as if the same walls could have buried in their gloom his mind itself, and the truth which it enshrined.

Shepherd. Galileo and Milton met at Florence, or somewhere else in Tuscany. I wush I had been o' the pairty, and had got a keek through the Italian's telescope.

English Opium-Eater. Are we under any necessity, Mr Hogg——

Shepherd. Nane whatsomever.

English Opium-Eater.——of remembering the same fruits of astronomical knowledge, in order to venerate the name of Newton? Or, do we imagine that he himself saw in his sublime speculations nothing more than the powers they would furnish to man? We never think of such advantages. We conceive of his mind as an intelligence satisfying its own nature in its contemplations, and our views of what he effected for mankind terminate when we have said, that he assisted them to comprehend the sublimity of the universe.

Shepherd. Chalmers never spoke better—nor sae weel—in his *Astronomical Discourses,*—yet in preaching he's a Paul.

English Opium-Eater. A world as full of wonders—ay, far fuller, my dear Shepherd—is disclosed to the metaphysical eye—yours or mine—exploring the manifestations of spirit—and all its heavenly harmonies. All sorrow and all joy, the calamities which have shaken empires, the crimes which have hurried single souls into destruction, the grounds of stability, order, and power, in the government of man, the peace and

happiness that have blossomed in the bosom of innocent life, the loves that have inwoven joy with grief, the hopes that no misery can overwhelm, the stern undaunted virtue of lofty minds,—if such thoughts have any power to produce tenderness, or elevation,—if awe, and pity, and reverence, are feelings which do not pass away, leaving the mind as unawakened and barren as before—if our capacities are dilated by the very images of solemn greatness of which they are made the repository—then is such study important, not merely by the works which may spring from it, when genius and science meet, but by its agency on the mind itself engaged in it, which is thereby enlarged and elevated.

Shepherd. I would like to hear ye, sir, conversin wi' Coleridge and Wordsworth.—Three cataracts a' thunderin at ance! When you drap your voice in speaking, it reminds me o' that line in Cawmel—

"The torrent's smoothness ere it dash below."

I never could understaun' distinctly the distinction between the Useful and the Fine Arts. I begin to suspeck there is nane in nature.

English Opium-Eater. Distinction-drawing is generally deceptive. Madame de Stael praises in monuments their noble inutility. Yet how can that which moves affection be useless? It is a means of happiness. Schools surely are useful, yet they tutor the mind only.

Shepherd. That's as plain as a pike-staff.

English Opium-Eater. Again, shall we call a Language-Master useful, and yet the poem useless out of which he teaches his pupils?

Shepherd. There would assuredly be nae logic in that, sir.

English Opium-Eater. What is a Music-Master? Why, his trade is useful to himself—he teaches one pupil a useful trade, and another, we shall say, a useless accomplishment. Yet is he not useless himself in teaching the useless accomplishment, because he gains thereby useful money.

Shepherd. Ane can never gang far wrang, I see, in ony doubtfu' discussion, to bring in the simile o' the rainbow.

English Opium-Eater. What is a Poet who indulges pleasure, and purposes pleasure merely to others; yet in the mean time sets printers and booksellers in motion?

Shepherd. Dinna be angry we me, sir, for requeestin you, gin ye hae nae objections, to define Utility.

English Opium-Eater. It can be nothing but Production of Enjoyment. Yet these things of which the essence and sole existence is enjoyment, though they do not end with the present enjoyment, but by their influence on the mind are causes of future enjoyment, are held useless!

Shepherd. I jalouse there maun be something at the bottom of the question which ye haena yet expiscated. How stauns Poetry?

English Opium-Eater. Utility, it may be said, regards the Persons of Mankind, Poetry their Dreams.

Shepherd. That's rather antithetical—but very vague. It'ill hardly do, sir.

English Opium-Eater. Mr Hogg, I beg your attention for a few minutes. There is a great root of Utility—the bodily life. Whatever springs out of this is useful—agriculture, weaving, and brickmaking, in the first degree. Secondly, things subservient and subordinate to these—the protection of property by laws, the king, and the army. Then, as it is impossible to eat, or live in peace in your house without public morals, or to hold the state, the great and universal shield of men's bodies, together without them—Morality and Religion. This is one Utility—that of the body.—Some inquirers seem hardly to know another. But man, James, has two natures, and his Utility has two roots. The above is reversed, beginning from his immortal and ever-happy soul, resting upon, rooted in, Deity. Proceed hence, and you derive at last the body, and earth, which, as we are constituted, are means to this soul, and necessary conditions to its fulfilling its own birth and destiny. But, begin from the body, which is to last from day to day—or from the soul, which is to last for ever—in either way you comprehend a Totality, the whole Being; arts for his body, science and morals for his soul. Imagination—Poetry—seems to elapse—to elude grasp—between. It is neither the body nor the soul; but a light that plays about both.

Shepherd. Something sublime in a' that, sir; but rather unsatisfactory at the hinner end, when you come upon the preceese pint o' Poetry.

English Opium-Eater. Imagination of the arts seems separ-

able, as a mimicry of reality—a play of mind borrowed from all real things—in itself unreal.

Shepherd. Be it sae—it soun's sensible.

English Opium-Eater. Tell the difference between Homer and Greek history, between Shakespeare and English history.

Shepherd. Eh?

English Opium-Eater. When I compare Homer with the Roman history, I am tempted to say, the difference is, that we trace down the series of causations in actual events (bodily events) from Cæsar to ourselves: But Troy, like Olympus, is a world between which and us clouds roll. Yet this avails not when Shakespeare writes Henry the Fifth. There is the very man—our king—more alive and himself than in history. Are there clouds, then, O Shepherd, between him and me—and do I, after all, see but his glorified shadow?

Shepherd. I suspeck but his glorified shadow.

English Opium-Eater. This, then, is the power of Poetry—it divides *from* the real world what it takes *in* the real world. Is not the Temple of Diana in a grove separate from this world, though built from the town quarry, and upon ground which is not only mere earth, but made part of such a man's property, and paying rent? So Poetry consecrates—and so—but higher far—doth Religion.

Shepherd. Do you ever gang to the kirk, Mr De Quinshy?

English Opium-Eater. Religion consecrates that which was common by changing it to our feelings—that is, our feelings to it. But what change? Is it removed *from* use? No:—It is consecrated *to* use:—but to pure, high, unworldly use. In approaching, contemplating that which is holy, our spirit seems freed from many bonds. Fetters of this world fall off. Holy bonds are laid on us, and holy bonds, which the soul receives willingly, are, therefore, Liberty and Law.

Shepherd. I aye thocht Liberty had been ae thing, and Law anither—just like black and white.

English Opium-Eater. I think that all feeling of pleasure is, or necessarily appears to be—spontaneous; and that, in consequence, all forms of thought and action, which are the natural produce of, and are produced by feelings of pleasure, appear to be free. They appear to be the spontaneous product of our minds, and spontaneity is freedom. Further,

forms of thought and action, which are not the work of our mind, but are presented to it, provided that feeling which appears to us spontaneous flows into these forms, and is at home in them—then are those forms, Mr Hogg, freely accepted, and we are still conscious of liberty.

Shepherd. That's geyan glimmery.

English Opium-Eater. Now, my dear Shepherd, Poetry is an example of forms which are the produce of our feelings of pleasure. Religion and Morality, when accepted with love, are examples of forms presented to us, and accepted with the consciousness of liberty retained. But in both Religion and Morality there is necessarily some invention of the loving and happy mind for itself; and of a verity, Christianity is free—for it ingrafts a spirit out of which forms arise freely—and that spirit is LOVE.

Shepherd. Do ye understaun' the great question of Liberty and Necessity, sir? It's desperate kittle.

English Opium-Eater. I call the will free—thereby expressing a feeling. Whether the present movement and the present determination of my will arise necessarily out of the predisposition of my mind, and is a necessary effect of existing causes, is a question of a fact wholly out of the domain of my consciousness. Our feeling of freedom is quite independent of and irrelevant to the fact of liberty or necessity. It is a feeling which throws no light, and possibly, in the nature of things, can throw none upon its own cause. A feeling springs up in us suddenly, seeming to us unpreformed, the birth of the moment. A person has loved me, and done acts of love to me that have made me happy for those twenty years past. I love that person. I may say that I know the causes of my love; the course of means which have constrained my love—yet notwithstanding that known conviction and constraint, I feel my love to be free.

North (*flourishing his crutch, and marching from the niche*). Hurra! Tickler's done brown.

Tickler (*agitatedly pulling up the waistband of his tights*). I'll play you a main of Three for a Thousand Guineas.

Shepherd. A thoosan' guineas! That's fearsome.

Tickler. Another jug? The Dolphin!

Shepherd. Mr North?

North. Laws were made to be broken—so pull the bell-rope——

Shepherd. I hae mair sense than do that. I never gied a worsted rape a rug a' my days that it didna burst. I'll roar doun the lug. Awmrose—Awmrose—the Dolphin! (*Enter* Mr Ambrose, *like Arion*). Ready-made and reekin! Mawgic!

Tickler. That's a poor, mean, degrading simile of Byron's, James, of the dying dolphin and the dying day.[1]

Shepherd. I never recolleckit a line of poetry a' my days—but I dinna dout it's bad—for you hae a gleg ee for fauts, but a blunt ane for beauties, sir.

Tickler. Borrowed, too, from Butler's boiled lobster and the reddening dawn.[2]

Shepherd. Coffee's nae slokener—and I am unco thrusty. The King!

Omnes. God bless him!

Shepherd. Hunger's naething till Thrust. Ance in the middle o' the muir o' Rannoch I had near dee'd o' thrust. I was crossing frae Loch Ericht fit[3] to the heid o' Glenorchy, and got in amang the hags,[4] that for leagues and leagues a' round that dismal region seem howked out o' the black moss by demons doomed to dreary days-dargs[5] for their sins in the wilderness. There was naething for't but loup—loup—loupin out o' ae pit intil anither—hour after hour—till, sair forfeuchen,[6] I feenally gied mysel up for lost. Drought had sooked up the pools, and left their cracked bottoms barkened[7] in the heat. The heather was sliddery as ice, aneath that torrid zone. . Sic a sun! No ae clud on a' the sky glitterin wi' wirewoven sultriness! The howe o' the lift[8] was like a great cawdron pabblin into the boil ower a slow fire. The element o' water seemed dried up out o' natur, a' except the big draps o' sweat that plashed doun on

[1] ——— "Parting day
Dies like a dolphin, whom each pang imbues
With a new colour as it gasps away,
The last still loveliest, till—'tis gone—and all is grey."
Childe Harold, canto iv., st. 39.

[2] "The sun had long since in the lap
Of Thetis taken out his nap,
And like a lobster boiled, the morn
From black to red began to turn."—*Hudibras.*

[3] *Fit*—foot.
[4] *Hags*—pits whence peat has been dug.
[5] *Days-dargs*—days' labours.
[6] *Forfeuchen*—fatigued.
[7] *Barkened*—hardened.
[8] *Howe o' the lift*—hollow of the sky.

my fevered hauns that began to trummle like leaves o' aspen. My mouth was made o' cork covered wi' dust—lips, tongue, palate, and a', doun till my throat and stammack. I spak—and the arid soun' was as if a buried corpse had tried to mutter through the smotherin mouls. I thocht on the tongue of a parrot. The central lands o' Africa, whare lions gang ragin mad for water, when cheated out o' blood, canna be worse—dreamed I in a species o' delirium—than this dungeon'd desert. Oh! but a drap o' dew would hae seem'd then pregnant wi' salvation!—a shower out o' the windows o' heaven, like the direct gift o' God. Rain! Rain! Rain!—what a world o' life in *that* sma' word! But the atmosphere look'd as if it would never melt mair, intrenched against a' liquidity by brazen barriers burnin in the sun. Spittle I had nane—and when in desperation I sooked the heather, 'twas frush and fushionless, as if withered by lichtnin, and a' sap had left the vegetable creation. What'n a cursed fule was I—for in rage I fear I swore inwardly (Heev'n forgie me), that I didna at the last change-house put into my pouch a bottle o' whisky! I fan' my pulse—and it was thin—thin—thin—sma'—sma'—sma'—noo nane ava—and then a flutter that telt tales o' the exhausted heart. I grat.[1] Then shame came to my relief—shame even in that utter solitude. Somewhere or ither in the muir I knew there was a loch, and I took out my map. But the infernal idiwut that had planned it hadna allooed a yellow circle o' aboon six inches square for a' Perthshire. What's become o' a' the birds—thocht I—and the bees—and the butterflees—and the dragons?—a' wattin their bills and their proboscisces in far-off rills, and rivers, and lochs! O blessed wild-dyucks, plouterin in the water, streekin theirsels up, and flappin their flashin plumage in the pearly freshness! A great big speeder, wi' a bag-belly, was rinnin up my leg, and I crushed it in my fierceness—the first inseck I ever wantonly murdered sin' I was a wean. I kenna whether at last I swarfed or slept—but for certain sure I had a dream. I dreamt that I was at hame—and that a tub o' whey was staunin on the kitchen dresser. I dook'd my head intil't, and sooked it dry to the wood. Yet it slokened[2] not my thrust, but aggravated a thousand-fauld the torment o' my greed. A thunder-plump or water-spout brak amang the hills—and in an instant

[1] *Grat*—wept. [2] *Slokened*—quenched.

a' the burns were on spate; the Yarrow roarin red, and foaming as it were mad,—and I thocht I could hae drucken up a' its linns. 'Twas a brain fever ye see, sirs, that had stricken me—a sair stroke—and I was conscious again o' lyin broad awake in the desert, wi' my face up to the cruel sky. I was the verra personification o' Thrust!—and felt that I was ane o' the Damned Dry, doom'd for his sins to leeve beyond the reign o' the element to a' Eternity. Suddenly, like a man shot in battle, I bounded up into the air—and ran off in the convulsive energy o' dying natur—till doun I fell—and felt that I was about indeed to expire. A, sweet saft celestial greenness cooled my cheek as I lay, and my burnin een—and then a gleam o' something like a mighty diamond—a gleam that seemed to comprehend within itsel the haill universe—shone in upon and through my being.—I gazed upon't wi' a' my senses. Mercifu' Heaven! what was't but—a WELL in the wilderness;—water—water—water,—and as I drank—I prayed!

Omnes. Bravo—bravo—bravo! Hurra—hurra—hurra!

Shepherd. Analeeze that, Mr De Quinshy.

English Opium-Eater. Inspiration admits not of analysis—in itself an evolvement of an infinite series——

Shepherd. Isna the Dolphin rather ower sweet, sirs? We maun mak haste and drain him—and neist brewst, Mrs Awmrose maun be less lavish o' her sugar—for her finest crystals are the verra concentrated essence o' saccharine sweetness, 'twa lumps to the mutchkin.

English Opium-Eater. Mr Hogg, that wall-flower in your button-hole is intensely beautiful, and its faint wild scent mingles delightfully with the fragrance of the coffee——

Shepherd. And o' the toddy—ae blended bawm. I pu'd it aff ane o' the auld towers o' Newark, this morning, frae a constellation o' starry blossoms, that a' nicht lang had been drinkin the dews, and at the dawin could hardly haud up their heads, sae laden was the haill bricht bunch wi' the pearlins o' heaven. And would ye believe't, a bit robin-redbreast had bigged its nest in a cosy cranny o' the moss wa', ahint the wall-flower, a perfect paradise to brood and breed in,—out flew the dear wee beastie wi' a flutter in my face, and every mouth opened as I keeked in—and then a' was hushed again—just like my ain bairnies in ae bed at hame—

no up yet—for the hours were slawly intrudin on the "innocent brichtness o' the new-born day;" and it was, guessing by the shadowless light on the tower and trees, only about four o'clock in the mornin.

Tickler. I was just then going to bed.

Shepherd. Teetus Vespawsian used to say sometimes—"I have lost a day"—but the sluggard loses a' his life, and lets it slip through his hauns like a knotless thread.

English Opium-Eater. I am no sluggard, Mr Hogg—yet I——

Shepherd. Change nicht into day, and day into nicht, rinnin coonter to natur, insultin the sun, and quarrellin wi' the equawtor. That's no richt. Nae man kens what Beauty is, that hasna seen her a thousan' and a thousan' times lyin on the lap o' nature, asleep in the dawn—on an earthly bed a spirit maist divine.

English Opium-Eater. The Emotion of Beauty——

Shepherd. Philosophers say there's nae sic thing as Beauty! and Burns, out o' civility to Dr Dugald Stewart and Mr Alison, confessed that it's a' association o' ideas. Mr De Quinshy, I howp ye dinna believe sic havers?

English Opium-Eater. Mr Alison's work on Taste might convert the most sceptical, so winningly beautiful! It has revealed, not merely the philosophy, but the religion of the Fine Arts. He does not deny adaptations of the world of Matter to the world of Mind—harmonies which——

Shepherd. But is there nae sic thing as Beauty? Nor Sublimity?

North. Don't be alarmed, my dear James. Beauty, wherever you go, "pitches her tents before you;" nor can it signify a straw whether she be the living queen of the green earth, blue sky, and purple ocean, or an apparition evolved from your own imaginative genius.

English Opium-Eater. We seem to take Beauty in two senses—for we sometimes oppose it to Sublimity; and yet we have a feeling, that over Sublimity there lies a thin transparent veil of Beauty, which makes it not terror and pain, but delightful Poetry. Methinks, too, that there is a Beauty that lies out of Imagination and Poetry—merely or nearly sensible—without intellect, and without passion; for example, that of a colour,—of some soft, fair, inexpressive faces——

Shepherd. Often very bonny — but a body sune tires o' them—sae like babbies.

English Opium-Eater. I think Dr Brown clearly wrong, who says that there is no essential difference between Beauty and Sublimity, because a stream begins in simple loveliness, and ends in being the Mississippi or River of Amazons. Beauty begins to be high, when it is felt to affect Intellect with a sense of expansion, with a tendency to the indefinite—the infinite. If it ever appears—which I have said it sometimes does — shut up in soft sense — and unimaginative, the reason is, that this expansive intellectual action is then stopped—stagnated in mere present pleasure. Such pleasure might appear, to our first reflection upon it, to be wholly of sense, even though, in metaphysical exactness, it were not so: but the difference in kind between Beauty and Sublimity is, that the element of the first is Pleasure, of the second Pain.

Shepherd. Eh?

English Opium-Eater. There are two obviously, or apparently distinct Sublimities—one of desolate Alps, the other of the solar system, and Socrates.

Shepherd. Whew!

English Opium-Eater. In the one, the soul seems to struggle, and be in a sort conquered — or it may conquer. I don't know which——

Shepherd. Aiblins baith—alternately.

English Opium-Eater. In the other, it sympathises with calm great Power, and is serenely elated.

North. Burke's Fear is in the first——

Shepherd. What! Burke—Hare—and Knox![1]

North. Edmund Burke, James. — But how, my dear sir, is there pain in the second?

English Opium-Eater. In the case of Moral Sublimity, sir, it is evident that there is a triumph of the Moral Sense over some sort of pain: that is the essential condition of all Moral Sublimity. Even when the conquest is over pleasure, it is a conquest over the pain of relinquishing the pleasure.

Shepherd. Maist ingenious and intricate!

English Opium Eater. But in the Sublimity of the order of the universe, there seems to be no pain—nothing but the sublimizing intellectual apprehension of Infinitude.

[1] See *ante*, p. 185-196.

North. That kind of Sublimity, then, Mr De Quincey, might less seem to have a distinction in kind from softest Beauty, or any Beauty from which imagination seems most to be withdrawn. For if in such Beauty there is the feeling of indefiniteness, not of great extension, but of the mere obliteration and invisibility of limits, then that indefiniteness is the beginning — or the least degree of infiniteness — and it would require very nice analysis indeed, to show that from low Beauty, or from good Beauty, up to this Sublimity, there are new, not differently proportioned, elements.

Shepherd. Confound me, Mr North, if you're no gettin as unintelligible as Mr De Quinshy himself — Hae ye been chowin opium?

English Opium-Eater. This subliming infinite is mixed with pain in the

"Good man struggling with the storms of Fate."

Shepherd. I understaun' that—for 'tis like a flash o' truth.

English Opium-Eater. Pain and fear seem the proper elements of the natural Sublimity of this world, considered as the domain and theatre of imagination; as in desolate Alps, on which I think the earth is considered as the seat of man, with reference to, and subordinate to him,—at least as collected within itself and about him, and it is not considered in reference to all creation. The sun appears in *our* sky—lightening *us* — not as the centre of the solar system. Therefore, even if the Deity is felt in the earthly scenes of imagination, it is not with distinct intellectual acknowledgment or estimate of the laws of his government, or of his agency:—his power is felt as a power that bursts out occasionally and uncertainly—that is, it is seen as it is felt—that is, it is seen by feeling—and only what is felt is seen—the feeling is all the seeing—so that cessation of feeling is utter darkness—and there is intellectual death.

Shepherd. Nae wonder, nae wonder—that under sic circumstances death should ensue; but what is a' this about, and whare will it end—this world or the neist?

English Opium-Eater. And as our feeling, Mr Hogg, is by bursts and uncertain, so the manifestations of power in such scenes are to us looking with imagination, by bursts and uncertain. When we view the universe intellectually, all is seen equably, steadily by intellect:—Power appears all-pervading and uniform, as it did to Sir Isaac Newton.

Shepherd. Mr North, what for dinna ye speak? What wi' Mr De Quinshy's monotonous vice, and Mr Tickler's monotonous snore, my een's beginnin to steek.

North. When I read *Lear*, all my fleshly nature, in such Sublimity, is smitten down by fear and pain, but my spirit survives, conquering, and indestructible. As to Beauty, again, James, the most marked thing in it is the feeling of love towards the object made beautiful by that feeling of love. Love, if ye can, the sublime object which shivers and grinds to dust your earthly powers, and then you overspread Sublimity with Beauty — like a merciful smile breaking suddenly from the face of some dreadful giant.

English Opium-Eater. A very large—or very small animal becomes imaginative—as——

Shepherd. What do you mean, sir? I insist on your tellin me what you mean, Mr De Quinshy?

English Opium-Eater. As an eagle or a humming-bird. In the first there is expansion—in the second contraction; but in both, a going of intellect out of the accustomed habit-fixed measure. There is an intellectual tendency *from* or *out of;* namely, from or out of ourselves, but ourselves peculiarly conditioned—namely, as we exist in the world. For if Ourself were high and fair, sublime and spiritual, there would be something gained, perhaps, by going out of the I or Me. But we have accumulated a narrow, petty, deadly, earth-thickened self; and every departure from this may be gain.

Shepherd (*bawling down his ear*). Awmrose! a nicht-cap!

(*Enter* Mr Ambrose *with a night-cap.*)

Thank you—ye needna tie the strings—now, wheel in the sofa—and let's hae a nap.

[Shepherd *lies down on the Tiroclinium.*

North. Thou Brownie!

Shepherd. Noo—I can defy your havers—for I'm aff to the Land of Nod. Gude nicht. Wauken me at sax o'clock, in time for the Fly. [*Sleeps.*

English Opium-Eater. In the brightest beauty there is perfect composure and calm.

Shepherd (*turning on his side*). Are you speakin about me?

English Opium-Eater. The understanding sees distinctly, and the heart rests, and yet there is conscious Imagination. And why doth the soul thus rejoice in a repose in which it has no participation?

Shepherd. You may participate, if you like. There's room aneuch on the sofa for twa.

English Opium-Eater. Whence this sympathy with an unsouled, inanimate world? Because the human soul is perpetually making all things external and circumstant a mirror to itself of itself,—filling all existence with emblems, symbols,—everywhere seeing and reading them, and in gazing outwardly, still wrapt in self-study,—or rather intuitive self-knowledge. The soul desires, loves, longs for peace in itself: it is almost its conception's deepest bliss. Wherever, therefore, it discovers it, it rejoices in the image whereof it seeks the reality. Thus, the calm human countenance, the wide waters sleeping in the moonlight, the stainless marble depth of the immeasureable heavens, reflect to it that tranquillity which it imagines within itself—represents that which it desires. The pictured shadow is grateful to it, wanting the substance. It loves to look on what it loves, though it cannot possess it,—and hence the feeling of the soul, in contemplating such a calm, is not of simple repose, but desire stirs in it, as if it would fain blend itself more deeply with the quiet which it beholds. All the while, it is Beauty that creates the desire: and never is there the feeling of Beauty—no, never—without the transfer on the object, or the transfusion, by the mind, of some quality or character not in the object. In most, and in all great instances, there is apprehension, dim and faint, or more distinct, of pervasion of a spirit throughout that which we conceive to be beautiful. Stars, the moon, the deep-bright ether, waters, the rainbow, a fair lovely flower,—none of them ever appear to us, or are believed by us, to be mere physical, unconscious, dead aggregate of atoms.

Shepherd. I'm only pretendin to be sleepin, sir; and noo you're really speakin like yoursel—at ance Poet and Philosopher. Do you ken, sir, that I aye understaun' everything best when I'm lyin a' my length on my side—or my back—which I attribute to my early shepherd-life amang the hills. Walkin, or stannin, or even sittin, I'm sometimes geyly stupid—but lyin, never! Thochts come croodin like eemages, and feelings croonin like music, and the haill mortal warld swims in licht, or a saft vapoury haze, through which a' things appear divinely beautiful. I learnt the secret, without seekin for't, just by lyin upon the braes in my plaid amang the sheep.

North. I remember translating a poem of Schiller's, in which is a verse to this effect—

All lived to me—the Tree—the Flower—
To me the murmuring Fountain sung;
What feels not, felt, so strong a power
Of life, my life o'er all had flung.[1]

Shepherd. A' us fowre, sirs, hae been made what we are—ower and aboon the happy, natural, constitutional temper o' our speerit—by ha'in been born and bred in a mountaneous kintra. Some signal exceptions there are undoubtedly—though I forget them just the noo,—but folk in general are a' flat-souled as weel's flat-soled, in a flat kintra. God bless our ain native snaw-white-headed, emerald-breisted native region o' the storms. [*Starting up and seizing the Dolphin.*

North. How purely imaginary the line that separates the two countries! Yet love delights in the distinction, as it hovers over the Tweed,—and to the ear of the native of each land—what a mystery in the murmurs of the kingdom-cleaving River! Sweet bold music! worthy of distinguishing—without dividing—England from Scotland—a patriotic poetry flowing in the imaginations of their heart-united sons.

Shepherd. Ay—the great glory o' auld Scotland ance was, that she could fecht England without ever ha'in been ance totally subdued. Yet if that incarnate Fiend the First Edward hadna been stricken deid, chains micht hae been heard clinkin through a' her forests. God swoopit him aff—his son fled afore the Bruce—and auld Scotland thenceforth was free. Now—we fecht England in ither guise;—peace hath "her victories as well as war," and if we maun yield the pawm to England, wi' a gracefu' and majestic smile she returns it to her sister, as much as to say—"Let us wear it alternately on our foreheads."

English Opium-Eater. There are, as I imagine, Mr Hogg, numerous and complicated associations with the natural sounds peculiar to any region of the world, that would have to be taken into account in estimating those many, and often

[1] "Da lebte mir der Baum, die Rose,
Mir sang der Quellen Silberfall,
Es fühlte selbst das Seelenlose
Von meines Lebens Wiederhall."
Die Ideale.

unapparent causes which concur, in the great simplicity of natural life, to form even the national spirit of a people.

Shepherd. Nae dout, nae dout, sir; nae dout ava.

North. Yes, James, in a mountainous country like our Highlands, for example, where the hearts of the people are strongly bound to their native soil, the many and wild characteristic sounds which are continually pouring on their ears, are like a language in which the spirit of their own wild region calls to them from the heart of the clouds or the hills. The torrent's continuous roar, the howling of blasts on the mountain-side, among the clefts of rocks, or over their cabins in lonely midnight, sounds issuing from caverns, the dashing roll of a heavy sea on the open or inland shore, wild birds screaming in the air—the eagle or the raven—the lowing of cattle on a thousand hills,—all these, and innumerable other sounds from living and inanimate things, which are around them evermore, mix in their heart with the very conception of the land in which they dwell, and blend with life itself.

English Opium-Eater. An hour ago, Mr Tickler, you challenged Mr North to a main at chess. Will you suffer me to be your antagonist for a single game?

Tickler. For Love and Glory. [*They retire to the niche.*

Shepherd. I want to hear your opinion, Mr North, about this Lord and Leddy Byron bizziness?

North. I see no need of bad blood between such men as Moore and Campbell, about such a man as Byron. Time—that is, a Month—must have soothed and sweetened the peccant humours——

Shepherd. Mr Cawmel, I'm thinkin, was the maist peccant—for after pattin and pettin Mr Muir on the back, he suddenly up, I hear, with his fists, and tries to floor him afore he can say Jack Robinson. Us poets are queer chiels—that's the only key to the mystery—and it 'ill open ony door.

North. As to Mr Campbell's having admitted into the *New Monthly* a short critical notice of Mr Moore's *Life of Byron*, without having read the volume, and as to his having scored out some objurgatory sentence or two in the said critique about the Biographer, it is silly or insincere to say a single syllable against that; for an editor would needs be in a condition most melancholy and forlorn, who, on the one hand, could not repose any confidence in any of his contributors, and, on the other, did not hold possession of the natural right

to expunge or modify, at his will and pleasure, whatever he feared might be painful to the feelings, or injurious to the reputation, of a friend. Truth is sacred—and being so, allows a latitude to her sincere worshippers, at which the false would stare in astonishment.

Shepherd. Nae need for an Editor to be a Drawco. Neither does an Editor become responsible—*in foro conscientiæ*—for ilka word his work may contain; if he did, there would soon be a period pitten till the Periodicals, for sameness and stupidity are twa deadly sins, and on that principle o' conduct, Maga herself would be sune flattened doun into stale and stationary unsaleability—in cellars stinkin o' stock.

North. God forbid I should wound the feelings of Lady Byron, of whose character—known to me but by the high estimation in which it is held by all who enjoy her friendship—I have always spoken with respect—as I have always shown my sympathy with her singular sufferings and sacrifices. But may I without harshness or indelicacy say, here among ourselves privately, my dear James, in this our own family-circle, that, by marrying Byron, she took upon her, with eyes wide open, and conscience clearly convinced, duties very different indeed from those of which, even in common cases, the presaging foresight shadows with a pensive but pleasant sadness—the light of the first nuptial moon?

Shepherd. She did that, sir. By ma troth, she did that.

North. Byron's character was a mystery then—as it is now—but its dark qualities were perhaps the most prominent—at least they were so to the public view, and in the public judgment. Miss Milbank knew that he was reckoned a rake and a roué; and although his genius wiped off, by impassioned eloquence in love-letters that were felt to be irresistible, or hid the worst stain of that reproach, still Miss Milbank must have believed it a perilous thing to be the wife of Lord Byron. Blinded we can well believe her to have been in the blaze of his fame—and she is also entitled to the privilege of pride. But still, by joining her life to his in marriage, she pledged her troth, and her faith, and her love, under probabilities of severe, disturbing, perhaps fearful trials in the future, from which, during the few bright days of love, she must have felt that it would be her duty never, under any possible circumstances, to resile.

Shepherd. Weel, weel, sir. Puir things! they a' dream

theirsels awa into a clear, dim, delightfu' delirium, that sae brichtens up, and at the same time sae saftens doun, the grim precipices and black abysms o' danger in the licht o' love and imagination, that a bairn, sae it seems, micht fa' asleep, or walk blindfauld alang the edges o' the rocks, and even were it to fa', would sink doun, doun on wings, and rest at the cliff-foot on a bed o' snaw, or say rather o' lilies and roses, and a' silken and scented flowerage!

North. I would not press this point harshly or hardly, so as to hurt her heart; but *now* that the debate, or rather the conjectural surmises, are about the Truth, and the Truth involving deep and dark blame of the dead, this much, I trust, may be said *here;* and if I be in aught wrong or mistaken, James, I have at least spoken now in a mild, and not unchristian spirit.

Shepherd. Age has mellowed the strang into the wise man. In ither twenty years you'll be perfeck.

North. That Byron behaved badly—very badly—to his wife, I believe, as firmly and as readily as Mr Campbell does, on the word of that unfortunate, but I hope not unhappy lady.

Shepherd. She canna be unhappy—for she's good.

North. But I think Lady Byron ought not to have printed that Narrative.[1] Death abrogates not the rights of a husband to his wife's silence, when speech is fatal—as in this case it seems to be—to his character as a man. Has she not flung suspicion over his bones interred,—that they are the bones of a—monster?

Shepherd. I haena seen, and never wish to see, her Remarks; but may she enjoy peace!

North. If Byron's sins or crimes—for we are driven to use terrible terms—were unendurable and unforgiveable—as if

[1] *A Letter to Thomas Moore, Esq., occasioned by his Notices of the late Right Hon. Lord Byron.* By LADY BYRON. 1830. Lady Byron's main object in publishing this Letter was to vindicate her parents from the charge advanced against them in Moore's *Life of Byron*, that they had been instrumental in bringing about the separation between her and her husband. The facts, as told by herself, are shortly these: She left Lord Byron, by his own desire, on the 15th January 1816. At this time, she says, "it was strongly impressed on my mind that Lord Byron was under the influence of insanity;" and entertaining this belief, she wrote to him on the 16th of January "in a kind and cheerful tone according to medical direction." She afterwards found that "the reports of his medical attendant were far from establishing anything like lunacy;" and then she goes on to say, "Under this uncertainty, I deemed it right to communicate to my parents, that if I were to consider Lord Byron's

against the Holy Ghost—ought the wheel, the rack, or the stake, to have extorted that confession from his widow's breast?

Shepherd. Pain micht hae chirted it out o' her tender frame.

North. But there was no such pain here, James; the declaration was voluntary—and it was calm. Self-collected, and gathering up all her faculties and feelings into unshrinking strength, she denounced before all the world, and throughout all space and all time—for his name can never die—her husband as excommunicated by his vices from woman's bosom!

Shepherd. 'Twas a fearsome step—and the leddy maun hae a determined speerit; but I am sorry that her guardian angel didna tell her to draw back her foot afore she planted it resolutely over the line o' prudence and propriety—I fear, indeed, o' natur and religion. Oh! that she had had some wise and tender being o' her ain sex by her side, aulder than hersel, and mair profoundly impressed, in the mournfu' licht o' declinin years, wi' the peril o' takin on ourselves the office o' retribution,—mair especially when our ain sorrows hae sprung frae ithers' sins—when the heart that conceived evil against us had often met our own in love or friendship——.

North. When, as in this case, the head once suspected to have been insane, had lain in the bosom of the injured—was once beautiful and glorious in the lustre of genius—"the palace of the soul," indeed, though finally haunted and polluted by the flesh-phantasms of many evil passions.

Shepherd. Some day I'll write your Life and Conversations, sir, after the manner o' Xenophon's Memorabilia o' Socrates.

North. 'Twas to vindicate the character of her parents that Lady Byron wrote—a holy purpose and a devout—nor do I doubt, sincere. But filial affection and reverence, sacred as

past conduct as that of a person of sound mind, nothing could induce me to return to him." The strange thing is, that she was confirmed in this determination by the opinion of Dr Lushington, who, at first, had thought a reconciliation practicable, but who, on receiving from Lady Byron some "additional information," declares to her in writing that "his opinion was entirely changed;" that "he considered a reconciliation impossible," and that "if such an idea should be entertained, he could not, either professionally or otherwise, take any part towards effecting it." Altogether it is a dark and miserable business: only this may be said, that neither right feeling, nor right reason, nor the respect due to exalted genius, will ever permit us to believe—without much stronger evidence than we have yet obtained—that the offences of the noble poet, bad as they may have been, were so utterly inexpiable as his lady and her learned adviser chose to consider them.

they are, may be blamelessly, nay, righteously subordinate to conjugal duties, which die not with the dead, are extinguished, not even by the sins of the dead, were they as foul as the grave's corruption. Misinterpret me not. I now accuse Lady Byron of no fault during her husband's life. I believe she did right in leaving him, though she was wrong in the mode of her desertion. But allowing that a painful and distressing collision between her filial and conjugal duties had occurred, ought she not, pure and high-minded woman as she is, to have balanced with a trembling hand, and a beating heart, what was due to her dead husband's reputation — stained and stripped as it had already been by his own evil deeds — against all that in the most reverential daughter's bosom could be due to the good name of her father and her mother, which, though breathed on rudely and unjustly, yet lay under no very heavy, no unsupportable weight of calumny, and was sure, in the tide of time, to be freed, almost or entirely, from all reproach; or, might she not have waited, meekly and trustingly, to a latter day, when all good spirits would have listened to her solemn and sacred, pitying and forgiving voice—when it, like her lord's, was invested with the awfulness of death and the grave?

Shepherd. Something within me says 'twould hae been better far.

North. To vindicate her mother from an unjust but no deadly charge, she has for ever sacrificed her husband. Such sacrifice I cannot but lament and condemn, though I know how difficult it is to judge aright of another's heart. I speak, therefore, not in anger, but in sorrow—and though in some moods I may soften the blame, in no moods am I able to lessen my regret. Then how calmly—how imperturbably she approaches—with no friendly voice—the gloom of the grave! In widow's weeds—but with no widow's tears visible on her marble cheeks; beautiful, it is said—but, methinks, stern and stoical, rather than meek and Christian; somewhat too lofty, when lowliness would have been lovely—and silent, enduring, misunderstood, and unappreciated forgiveness, angelical and divine!

Shepherd. In a' the great relations o' life, I suppose I may safely say, sittin in the presence o' sic a man as Christopher North—for I dinna count thae twa creturs in the corner—that

a' human beings are bound by the same ties, be their condition high or low, their lot cast in a hut or in a palace.

North. There the Shepherd speaketh like himself—and as none other speaks.

Shepherd. Now, only think, my dear sir, o' what has happened, is happening, and will happen to the end o' time, seein human nature is altogether corrupt, and the heart o' man desperately wicked, a thousan' and tens o' thousan's o' times in wedded life, a' ower the face o' this meeserable and sinfu' earth.

North. Bliss and Despair are the Lares of every House.

Shepherd. Oh! wae's me! and pity me the day! hoo many broken-hearted wives and widows are seen sichin and sabbin in poortith cauld, and wearin awa in consumptions, brought on them by the cruel sins o' their husbands!

North. When the spring-grove is ringing with rapture, we think not of the many wounded birds dying, emaciated of famine, in the darkness of the forests.

Shepherd. Not a few sic widows do I mysel ken, wham brutal, and profligate, and savage husbands hae brought to the brink o' the grave—as good, as bonny, as innocent—and oh! far, far mair forgivin than Leddy Byron! There they sit in their obscure and rarely-visited dwellings: for Sympathy—sweet spirit as she is—doth often keep aloof frae uncomplaining Sorrow—merely because she is uncomplaining—though Sympathy, instructed by self-sufforin, kens weel that the deepest, the maist hopeless meesery is the least given to complaint.

North. In speechless silence, long cherished, and unviolated as a holy possession, the passion of Grief feeds on materials ceaselessly applied by the ready hands of that officious minister, Memory,—till at last the heart in which it dwells, if deprived of such food, would verily die of inanition!

Shepherd. There sitteth Sorrow, sir—or keeps daunerin about the braes a' roun' her mournfu' hamestead, dimly lichted, and cauldly warmed by a bit peat or wood fire—for fuel is aften dear, dear—and to leeve, it's necessary first to hae food;—daunerin about, ghaistlike, in the sunshine, unfelt by her desolate feet—faint and sick, aiblins, through verra hunger, and obliged, on her way to the well for a can o' water—her only drink—to sit doun on a knowe and say a prayer!

North. The Lord's Prayer!

Shepherd. Ay, the Lord's Prayer! Yet she's decently, yea, tidily dressed, puir cretur, in her sair-worn widow's claes—ae single suit for Saturday and Sabbath—her hair, untimeously grey, is neatly braided aneath her crape-cap, across a forehead placid, although it wrinkled be;—and sometimes on the evening, when a' is still and solitary in the fields, and a' rural labour has disappeared awa into houses, you may see her stealin by hersel, or leadin ae wee orphan in her haun, and wi' anither at her breast, to the corner o' the kirkyard, where the lover o' her youth and the husband o' her prime is buried. Nae ugly hemlock—nae ugly nettles there—but green grass and crimson flowers—a' peacefu' and beautifu' as if 'twere some holy martyr's grave!

North. A consolatory image even of the last stage of human suffering.

Shepherd. Yet was he—a brute—a ruffian—a monster. When drunk, hoo he raged, and cursed, and swore! Aften did she dread that, in his fits o' inhuman passion, he would hae murdered the baby at her breast; for she had seen him dash their only callant—a wean o' eight years auld—on the floor, till the bluid gushed frae his ears, and then the madman flung himsel doun on the swarfed body o' his first-born, and howled out for the gallows. Limmers haunted his doors, and he theirs—and 'twas hers to lie—no to sleep—in a cauld forsaken bed—ance the bed o' peace, affection, and perfect happiness. Nane saw the deed—but it wouldna conceal, even frae averted een, for her face was ower delicate to hide the curse o' an unhallowed haun—aften had he struck her, and ance when she was pregnant wi' that verra orphan now smiling on her breast, too young yet to wonder at these tears, crowin in the sunshine, and reachin out its wee fingers—aften, aften covered wi' kisses—to touch the gowans glowing gloriously upon its indistinct but delichtsome vision, ower its father's grave!

North. "Ut Pictura Poesis."

Shepherd. Abuse his memory! Na—na, were it to save her frae sinkin a' at ance overhead into a quagmire. She tries to smile amang the neighbours, and speaks o' her callant's likeness to its faither. Nor, when the conversation turns on bygane times, the days o' auld langsyne, does she fear sometimes to let his name escape her white lips—"My Robert"—"Sic a ane owed that service to my gudeman,"—"The

bairn's no that ill-faured, but he'll never be like his faither,"—and ither sic sayings, uttered in a calm, laigh, sweet voice, and a face free o' a' trouble; nay, I ance remember how her pale countenance reddened on a sudden wi' a flash o' pride, when a silly auld gossiping crone alluded to their kirking, and the widow's een brichtened through their tears, to hear tell again hoo the bridegroom, sittin that Sabbath in his front seat in the laft beside his bonny bride, hadna his marrow for strength, stature, and every quality that becomes the beauty o' a man, in a' the congregation, nor yet in a' the parishes o' the haill county. That, sir, I say, whether richt or wrang, was—Forgiveness.

North. It was, James—

> "Familiar matter of to-day,
> What has been, and will be again;"

quoth the Beadsman of Rydal.

Shepherd. Is a leddy o' quality, the widow o' a lord, mair to be pitied than a simple cottager, the widow o' a shepherd? Maun poets weep and wail — and denounce and prophesy, about the ane, wi' the glow o' richteous indignation round their laurelled brows, illuminin the flow o' tears frae their een,

> "Which sacred Pity doth engender,"—

calling heaven and earth to witness to her wrongs, and launchin their anathemas on the heads o' a' that would, however tenderly, doubt the perfectibility o' a' her motives, and swither[1] about hymnin her as an angel superior to all frailty and all error, while they leave the like o' me, a puir simple shepherd, to sing the sacred praises o' the sufferers in shielins, far, far, far awa amang the dim obscure hills, frae — Fashionable Life! For what cares Nature in her ain solitudes for—Fashion? What cares Grief?—What cares Madness?—What cares Sin?—What cares—Death? No ae straw o' the truckle-bed on which at last the broken—no, not the broken—but the heart-worn-out-and-wasted widow expires amang her orphans.

North. Lady Byron deserves sympathy—and it will not be withholden from her — but freely, lavishly given. But there are other widows as woeful in this world of woe, as you have so affectingly pictured them, James; and let not men of virtue and genius seem to sympathise with her sorrows, so

[1] *Swither*—hesitate.

passionately as to awaken suspicions of their sincerity, so exclusively as to force thoughtful people to think, against their will and their wishes, that they are either ignorant or forgetful of the lot of humanity, as it is seen and heard, weeping and wailing—in low as in high places—over all the earth.

Shepherd. I canna think, if a' the world overheard us, that a single person could fin' faut wi' our sentiments. But, being sincere, I'm easy.

North. Lord Byron sinned—Lady Byron suffered. But has her conduct, on its own showing, been in all respects defensible?—without a flaw? Grant that it was—still think how it must have appeared to Byron, whatever was his guilt. She thought him mad—and behaved to him, during his supposed insanity, advisedly, and from pity and fear of his disease, with apparent affection. "My dear Duck!" How was it possible for him to comprehend the sudden cessation of all such endearing epithets—and to believe that they were all deceptive—delusive—false—hollow—a mere medical prescription? The shock must have been hideous to a man of such violent passions—to any guilty man. No wonder he raged—and stormed,—wonder rather that he became not mad—or more madly wicked. Yet very soon after that blow—say that it was not undeserved—we hear him vindicating Lady Byron from some mistaken but not unnatural notions of Mr Moore, and not merely confessing his own sins, but earnestly declaring that she was a being altogether agreeable, innocent, and bright.

Shepherd. Puir fallow!—bad as I fear he was—thae words will aye come across the memory o' every Christian man or woman, when Christianity tells them at the same time to abhor and take warning by his vices.

North. Lady Byron did wisely in not making a full disclosure at the first to her parents of all her husband's sins. It would have been most painful—how painful we may not even be able to conjecture. But since duty demanded a disclosure, that disclosure ought, in spite of all repugnance, to have been complete to a single syllable. How weak, and worse than weak, at such a juncture—on which hung her whole fate—to ask legal advice on an imperfect document! Give the delicacy of a virtuous woman its due; but at such a crisis, when the question was, whether her conscience was to be free from the oath of oaths, delicacy should have died, and nature

was privileged to show unashamed—if such there were—the records of uttermost pollution.

Shepherd. And what think ye, sir, that a' this pollution could hae been that sae electrified Dr Lushington?

North. Bad—bad—bad, James. Nameless, it is horrible—named, it might leave Byron's memory yet within the range of pity and forgiveness — and where they are, their sister affections will not be far — though, like weeping seraphs, standing aloof, and veiling their eyes with their wings.

Shepherd. She should indeed have been silent — till the grave had closed on her sorrows as on his sins.

North. Even now she should speak — or some one else for her — say her father or her mother (are they alive?) — and a few words will suffice. Worse the condition of the dead man's name cannot be,—far, far better it might—I believe it would be—were all the truth, somehow or other, declared,—and declared it must be, not for Byron's sake only, but for the sake of humanity itself,—and then a mitigated sentence—or eternal silence.

Shepherd. And what think ye o' the twa Tummasses?

North. I love and admire them both — their character as well as their genius. I care not a straw for either. They are great poets—I am no poet at all——

Shepherd. That's a lee—you are. Your prose is as gude ony day, and better than a' their poetry.

North. Stuff. They are, to use Mr Campbell's expressions about Mr Moore, men "of popularity and importance," — I possess but little of either—though the old man is willing to do his best—and sometimes——

Shepherd. Hits the richt nail on the head wi' a sledge-hammer, like auld Vulcan Burniwind fashionin swurds, spears, shields, and helmets, for Achilles.

North. Mr Moore's Biographical book I admired—and I said so to my little world—in two somewhat lengthy articles, which many approved, and some, I am sorry to know, condemned.[1] Obstinacy is no part of my character; and should it be shown that my estimate of Byron, up to the fatal marriage, was, as one whom I greatly esteem thinks, antichristian —forthcoming shall be my palinode. The petty, and paltry, and poisonous reptiles who crawl slimily over his bones, I

[1] Professor Wilson reviewed *Moore's Life of Byron* in *Blackwood's Magazine* for February and March 1830.

kick not into their holes and crannies, out of respect to my shoes.

Shepherd. Sharp-pinted!

North. Mr Moore thought better of Lord Byron than many —perhaps than most men do; but he had opportunities of judging which few men had — and I see no more reason for doubting his sincerity than his talents. These are unquestionable; and though I dissent entirely from some opinions advanced in his book, I will not suffer any outcry raised against it, either by people of power or weakness, to shake my belief in the general excellence of its spirit.

Shepherd. Nor me. It's an interesting and impressive quarto.

North. Mr Moore spoke what he believed to be the truth If he has drawn too favourable a character of Byron, time will correct it; but he has no reason to be ashamed of the portrait. The original sat to him often, and in many lights. But a man's soul is not like his face—and may wear a veil of hypocrisy, so transparent as to be invisible to the unsuspecting eyes of friendship. Who will blame Mr Moore bitterly, if he were indeed deceived?

Shepherd. No me, for ane. I like Muir.

North. And he likes you, James, and admires you too, as all other men do whose liking and admiration are worth the Shepherd's regard. It is most unfair—unjust—unreasonable —and absurd—to test the truth of what he has said by Lady Byron's letter. That letter astounded the whole world—opened their eyes, but to dazzle and blind them; and even they who abuse his biographer, are as wise now about Byron as they were before,—as much in the dark about facts, for which they go groping about with malign leer, like satyrs in a wood.

Shepherd. But Mr Campbell's no o' that class.

North. No indeed. But Mr Campbell—one of the best of poets and of men—does not well to be so angry with his brother bard. He acknowledges frankly—and frankness is one of his delightful qualities—that before he saw Lady Byron's Remarks, he did not know that she was so perfectly blameless as he now knows she is,—And, pray, how could Mr Moore know it either? Nobody did or could know it—nor, had all the ingenuity alive been taxed to conjecture an explanation of "My dear Duck," could it have hit on the right one

—a belief in Lady Byron's mind of her husband's insanity! Mr Moore believed (erroneously we now know) with all the rest of the world, that Lady Byron had been induced by her parents to change her sentiments and resolutions, and therefore he used—and at the time was warranted in using, the terms, "deserted husband."

Shepherd. Completely sae.

North. As to applying for information to Lady Byron on such a subject, that was utterly impossible; nor do I see how, or even why—under the circumstances—he should have applied to Mrs Leigh.[1] Thinking that some slight blame might possibly attach—or say, at once, did attach, to Lady Byron—and more to her parents—he said so,—but he said so gently, and tenderly, and feelingly—so I think—with respect to Lady Byron herself; though it would have been better—even had the case not stood as we now know it stands—had he not printed any coarse expression of Byron's about the old people.

Shepherd. You're a queer-lookin auld man—and your manners, though polished up to the finest and glossiest pitch o' the gran' auld schule—noo nearly obsolete—sometimes rather quaint and comical—but for soun' common sense, discretion, and wisdom, I kenna your equal; you can untie a Gordian knot wi' ony man; the kittler a question is, the mair successfully do you grapple wi't; and it's a sublime sicht—no without a tinge o' the fearsome—to see you sittin on Stridin-Edge like a man on horseback on the turnpike road, and without usin your hauns, but haudin the crutch aloft, descending alang that ridge, wi' precipices and abysses on every side o' you, in which, were you to lose your seat, you wad be dashed in pieces sma' like a potter's sherd,—from the cloud-and-mist region whare nae flower blooms, and nae bee bums, though a rainbow a' the while overarches you, doun safely to the greensward round the shingly margin o' Red-Tarn, and there sittin a' by yoursel on a stane, like an eemage or a heron.

North. I do not think that, under the circumstances, Mr Campbell himself, had he written Byron's Life, could have spoken—with the sentiments he tells us he then held—in a better, more manly, and more gentlemanly spirit, in so far as regards Lady Byron, than Mr Moore did; and I am sorry that he has been deterred from swimming through Mr Moore's

[1] The poet's step-sister, Augusta Byron, was the wife of Colonel Leigh. She died some years ago.

Work, by the fear of "wading,"—for the waters are clear and deep, nor is there any mud either at the bottom or round the margin.

Shepherd. O but I like thae bit rural touches, in which you naturally excel, ha'in had the benefit—an incalculable ane—a sacred blessin — o' leevin in the kintra in boyhood and youth,—and sae in auld age, glimpses o' the saft green o' natur visit the een o' your imagination amidst the stour and reek o' the stane-city, and tinge your toun-talk wi' the colouring o' the braes.

North. I am proud of your praise, my dear James, prouder of your friendship, proudest of your fame.

Shepherd (*squeezing Mr North's hand*). Does Mr Cawmel say that he kens the cause o' the separation?

North. I really cannot make out whether he says so or not —but I hope he does; for towards the close of his letter he acknowledges, I think, that we may still love and admire Byron, provided we look at all things in a true light. If so, then the conduct which was the cause cannot have been so black as the imagination left to itself, in the present mystery, will sometimes suggest.

Shepherd. That's consolatory.

North. Mr Campbell and Mr Moore—after so slight a quarrel—if quarrel it be—will be easily reconciled.[1] The Poets of *Gertrude of Wyoming*, and of *Paradise and the Peri*, must be brothers. If Mr Campbell has on this matter shown any failings—"they lean to virtue's side;" let ducks and geese nibble at each other in their quackery, but let amity be between the swans of Thames, whether they soar far off in flight through the ether, or glide down the pellucid waters, beautifully and majestically breasting the surges created by their own course, and bathing their white plumage in liquid diamonds.

Shepherd. Floory[2] and pearly!

North. I see a set of idle apprentices flinging stones at them both—but they all fall short with an idle splash, and the two royal Birds sail away off amicably together to a fairy isle in the centre of the lake—where for the present I leave them, —And do you, my dear James, put across the toddy.

Shepherd. The toddy! You've been sip-sippin awa at it for the last hour, out o' the verra jug—and never observed

[1] They *were* completely reconciled.

[2] *Floory*—flowery.

that you had broken the shank o' your glass. Noo and then I took a taste, too, just to show you the absurdity o' your conduct by reflection. But you was sae absorbed in your ain sentiments, that you wouldna hae noticed it, gin for the Dolphin I had substituted the Tower o' Babel. Na! if you haena been quaffin the pure speerit!

North. 'Twill do me no harm—but good. 'Tis M'Neill and Donovan's best, 6 Howard Street, Norfolk Street, Strand, London. They charm the Cockneys with the cretur pure from Islay,—and this is a presentation specimen full of long and strong life.

[TICKLER *and the* ENGLISH OPIUM-EATER *advance from the niche.*

Shepherd. What'n a face! As lang's an ell-wand. You've gotten yoursel drubbed again at the brodd, I jalouse, Mr Tickler. A thousan' guineas!

Tickler. Fortune forsook Napoleon—and I need not wonder at the fickleness of the jade. Our friend is a Phillidor.

Shepherd. I never heard afore that chess was a chance ggem.

Tickler. Neither was the game played at Waterloo—yet Fortune backed Wellington, and Buonaparte fled.

Shepherd. But was ye near making a drawn battle o't?

Tickler. Hem—hem.

English Opium-Eater. Like Marmont at Salamanca, by excess of science, Southside out-manœuvred himself—and thence fall and flight. He is a great general.

Tickler. There is but one greater.

Shepherd. So said Scipio of Hannibal.

Tickler. And Hannibal of Scipio.

North. And Zanga of Alonzo—

"Great let me call him, for he conquered me."

Shepherd. Let's hae, before we sit doun to soop, a ggem at the Pyramid.

English Opium-Eater. Sir?

Shepherd. You maun be the Awpex.

English Opium-Eater. And the Shepherd the Base. But I am in the dark. Pray?

Shepherd. Wull you promise to do as you're bidden, and to no mak questions?

English Opium-Eater. I swear, by Styx.

Shepherd. Weel done, Jupiter. Up wi' ye, then, on my back. Jump ontil that chair—then ontil the table—and then ontil my shouthers.

[*The* ENGLISH OPIUM-EATER, *with much alacrity, follows the* SHEPHERD'S *directions.*

North. Now, crutch! bend, but break not. Tickler—up.

[MR NORTH *takes up a formidable position, with his centre leaning on the wood, and* TICKLER *in a moment is on the shoulders of old* CHRISTOPHERUS.

Shepherd. Stick steddy, Mr De Quinshy, ma dear man—for noo comes the maist diffeecult passage to execute in this concerto. It has to be played in what museciners ca'—Alt.

[*The* SHEPHERD *mounts the steps of the Green Flower-Stand—and with admirable steadiness and precision places himself on the shoulders of* SOUTHSIDE.

North. All up?

Shepherd. I'm thinkin there's nane missin. But ca' the catalogue.

North. Christopher North! Here. Timothy Tickler!

Tickler. Hic.

North. James Hogg!

Shepherd. Hæc—hoc.

North. Thomas De Quincey!

English Opium-Eater. Adsum.

North. Perpendicular!

Shepherd. Strechen yoursel up, Mr De Quinshy—and clap your haun to the roof. Isna Mr North the Scottish Hercules? Noo, Mr English Opium-Eater, a speech on the state o' the nation.

[MR GURNEY *issues from the Ear of Dionysius—and the* ENGLISH OPIUM-EATER *is left speaking.*

END OF VOL. II.

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